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BOOTH MOONEY

# THE LYNDON JOHNSON STORY

*Revised and expanded edition;  
illustrated with photographs*

President Kennedy originally wanted Lyndon Johnson as his running mate because, he told Washington correspondent Joseph Alsop, "He is the ablest man I know in American politics, and he really cares about this country as I want a President to care." When President Kennedy was struck down by an assassin's bullet on November 22, 1963, a hugely important part of the legacy he left to Americans was his successor: Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th President of the United States.

This book is an authoritative account of the making of this man who became President. It is the story of forces that shaped a boy born on a Texas farm and turned him at an early age toward a political career that has culminated in the most powerful and responsible office in the nation, and perhaps in the world.

Lyndon Baines Johnson came to the Presidency of the United States with superb training for the job. His service as a member of Congress, first in the House of Representatives and then in the Sen-

*(continued on back flap)*

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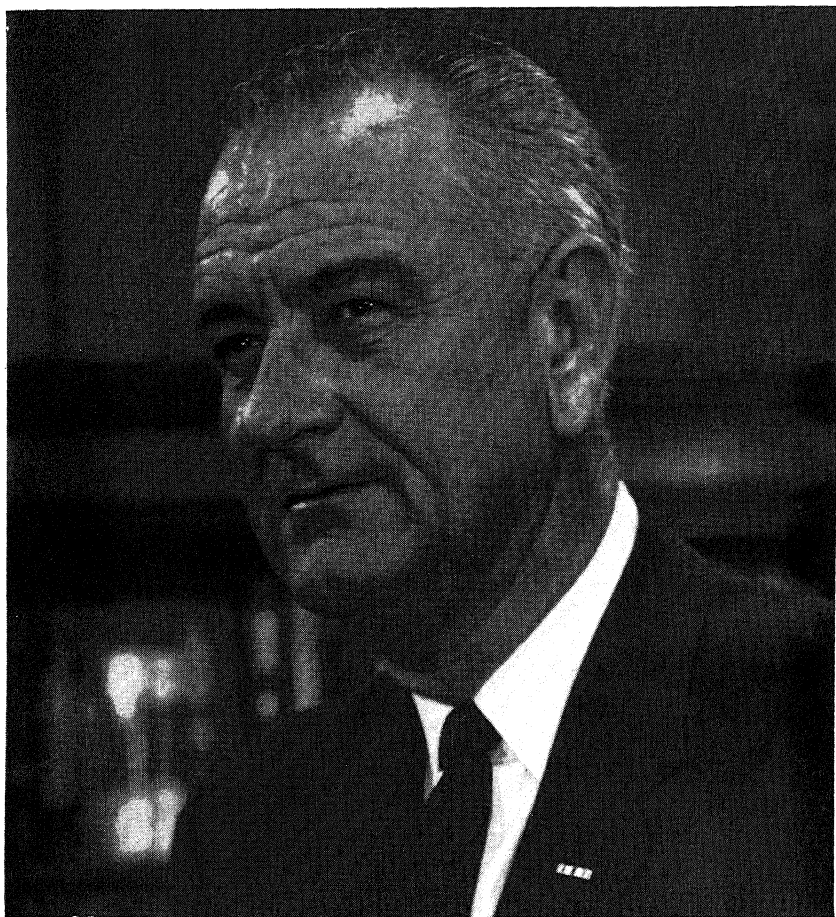
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## THE LYNDON JOHNSON STORY







THE THIRTY-SIXTH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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THE  
LYNDON JOHNSON  
STORY

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BOOTH MOONEY

FARRAR, STRAUS AND COMPANY  
New York

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by Ambassador Books, Ltd., Toronto.  
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Illustration on the jacket  
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*Dedicated, in friendship, to*  
WALTER JENKINS  
*and all other members of the Johnson*  
*office staff with whom I worked*

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# MY POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY\*

by Lyndon B. Johnson

I am a free man, an American, a United States Senator, and a Democrat, in that order.

I am also a liberal, a conservative, a Texan, a taxpayer, a rancher, a businessman, a consumer, a parent, a voter, and not as young as I used to be nor as old as I expect to be—and I am all these things in no fixed order.

I am unaware of any descriptive word in the second paragraph which qualifies, modifies, amends, or is related by hyphenation to the terms listed in the first paragraph. In consequence, I am not able—nor even the least interested in trying—to define my political philosophy by the choice of a one-word or two-word label. This may be against the tide, but, if so, the choice is deliberate.

At the heart of my own beliefs is a rebellion against this very process of classifying, labeling, and filing Americans under headings: regional, economic, occupational, religious, racial, or otherwise. I bridle at the very casualness with which we have come to ask each other, "What is your political philosophy?"

I resent the question most often not because I suspect it of guile and cunning, but for its innocence, the innocence

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that confuses dogma with philosophy and presumes that the answer can be given in a word or two. Our political philosophies, I have found, are the sum of our life's experience. God made no man so simple or his life so sterile that such experience can be summarized in an adjective. Yet we seem bent today on reducing every man's philosophy to a mere vital statistic, to the next question asked—of professors, students, public officials, job applicants, business executives, labor leaders, and many more—after age, weight, height, and color of eyes and hair.

Inquiries of men's philosophies do not fit this context.

It is a part of my own philosophy to regard individuality of political philosophy as a cornerstone of American freedom and, more specifically, as a right expressly implied in our nation's basic law and indispensable to the proper functioning of our system.

Our basic law—the Constitution—is distinctive among the basic law of all nations, even the free nations of the West, in that it prescribes no national dogma: economic, social, or religious.

Free enterprise, for example, is not mentioned. Nor are our parties or the party system. Nor is there any provision to require allegiance to any dogma or doctrine.

Yet government is an expression of philosophy, and active governments are inevitably guided by philosophers. As I see it, the mandate of our system—and, perhaps, the ultimate genius of it—is that the American people should be the true philosophers of the American Government within the limits upon governmental powers set by our Constitution.

This is an ennobling concept, yet like many things

noble and beautiful, it has certain frailties and we seem quick now to crush it. We crush out the individuality of our political beliefs and, by this process of high-speed sorting and classifying of Americans, automate our choice of courses and sterilize our explorations of the reasons why.

Some might suggest that my rebellion against this process is a show of the provincial Texan in me. I would disagree. Texans are independent and individual, but not the monopolists of these virtues that we sometimes suppose ourselves to be. The traits are American in origin and, fortunately for the Republic, are deposited quite widely, not part of certain regional hoards. Thus, I believe it is the American in me—even more than the Texan—that now reacts so strongly against the merging of the individual American into the mass in the name of dogma.

I realize, as I say this, that others might point to the Senate where I serve—and where I am, in fact, a designated leader of the majority party—and suggest that the example there of a two-party, two-philosophy system contradicts or is in conflict with this thesis. The opposite is so. Had I not been privileged to serve in Congress, I might never have come to hold the respect for individuality of philosophy that I do.

The very purpose of Congress, in our governmental form, is to arrive at national decisions by bringing together some 531 individuals, representing 170 million individuals, to achieve a consent on the way the nation should go. Were we bound by rigid dogmas, whatever their name, there would be no more cause for assembling Congress than for bringing the Soviet Presidium to-

gether. We are not so bound, and it is part—a great part—of my own philosophy that the Congress reaches a very dubious decision when its choices are made solely by head counts of the partisan division.

This leads to a listing of the tenets of my own beliefs, the specific tenets of my own philosophy. I would set them down this way :

First, I believe every American has something to say and, under our system, a right to an audience.

Second, I believe there is always a national answer to each national problem, and, believing this, I do not believe that there are necessarily two sides to every question.

Third, I regard achievement of the full potential of our resources—physical, human, and otherwise—to be the highest purpose of governmental policies next to the protection of those rights we regard as inalienable.

Fourth, I regard waste as the continuing enemy of our society and the prevention of waste—waste of resources, waste of lives, or waste of opportunity—to be the most dynamic of the responsibilities of our Government.

These tenets, I concede, are simple. They are certainly personal. For these are not tenets I have embraced or adopted but rather, beliefs I have—over 50 years—developed and come to follow from my own experience.

In the instance of the first listed, I realize that—in these times—the notion that each American has something to say and the right to an audience may seem excessively idealistic. I do not believe that is so, either in principle or in practice.

I am reminded always in my work at Washington of my own origins. I was born to the hill country of Texas,

a remote region then, still remote today although less so. My neighbors, friends, and relatives there live independently, self-contained if not self-sufficient.

They are distant from many national issues, yet neither their distance nor their limited information on any given subject makes them any less a party to the national decisions we reach in the halls of Congress. Knowing the folks at Johnson City and Blanco and Stonewall and Hye as I do, I know that it would be much more difficult for me to secure a unanimous agreement among them than among the Senators in Washington. Yet, in this individuality, my neighbors—or the constituency of all of Texas—are not different from Americans everywhere. There is likely to be merit in the views of the minority, quite as much as there is wisdom in the views of the majority. We have, as I see it, an obligation to seek out that merit, if it is there, and not merely to content ourselves with obliging the majority, for the majority's wisdom—however wise—is never the sum of all wisdom.

What we do, too often now, is oblige our patience with expedients. To grant audiences to 170 million Americans would be exhausting. So we make our divisions, our classifications, and our cross-classifications which permit us to forgo the listening and the searching we ought to do. Trouble compounds when, having made our divisions on one basis, we extend the application to other issues and other decisions. Here we adopt in our American political philosophy the pattern not of philosophy but of cults devoted to dogma, and we construct false equations which produce false answers.

This equation process is much a part of our party sys-

tems, and contributes to the myth of the concept that "there are two sides to every question." True, there are two parties. That is not the same as two sides. But, by maintaining the two-side concept, we satisfy our consciences—again as a matter of convenience—that when a partisan majority has prevailed there is no need to examine either the majority's side or the minority's side again. Our reasoning is that since there are two sides, either side would have been acceptable, and hence the answer decided by political strength does not require closer scrutiny.

I think otherwise. This popular view is, I feel, very much counter to our American philosophy based on the thinking of men like Jefferson and Madison. I do not believe we have arrived at an answer until we have found the national answer, the answer all reasonable men can agree upon, and our work is not done until that answer is found—even if the process requires years of our lives.

Here fits the third tenet of my philosophy—and the fourth. Had America been bound by the Constitutional Convention to the philosophies of the 18th century—and by the limits of the wisdom and vision of those times—we would not have the nation that is ours today. Our rising greatness through more than 180 years has come from our freedom to apply our accumulating knowledge to the processes of our self-government. Or, to state it another way, this has come because America's course has been left to the living. Thus, the 18th-century philosophy of our Constitution has allowed for growth so that it is still strong, still good for our 20th century.

Our nation, like all nations, is possessed of certain re-



sources—resources of nature, resources of position, and resources of the human mind. Without conquest or aggrandizement, we cannot add to these basics. Thus whatever we are to be we must build from those things at our disposal, and to content ourselves with less than the ultimate potential is to deny our heritage and our duty.

Obviously, having come from a land like Texas, I feel this strongly. Of all endeavors on which I have worked in public life, I am proudest of the accomplishments in developing the lower Colorado River during the 1930's and 1940's. It is not the damming of the stream or the harnessing of the floods in which I take pride, but, rather, in the ending of the waste of the region.

The region—so unproductive and insignificant in capacity in my youth—is now a vital part of the national economy and potential. More important, the wastage of human resources in the whole region has been reduced. New horizons have been opened for the fulfillment of young minds, if by nothing more than the advent of electricity into rural homes. Men and women have been released from the waste of drudgery and toil against the unyielding rock of the Texas hills. This is fulfillment of the true responsibility of government.

Conversely, the elimination of waste of this sort carries with it a continuing obligation for government—at all levels—not to create waste itself by extracting from the people the fruits of their new opportunities through improvident excesses in spending and taxing. This is an increasingly critical area for American government, but one to which we sometimes apply false standards.

Government can waste the people's resources by inertia,

quite as much as by vigor. Government can, for example, fall into a state of complacency over the relative positions of strength between nations in the world. An international stalemate with Communism would, I believe, be the greatest waste of American resources and the resources of freedom, even though stalemate produced no war. A vital government cannot accept stalemate in any area—foreign or domestic. It must seek the national interest solution, vigorously and courageously and confidently.

These tenets are the tenets of my political philosophy.

Some who equate personal philosophies with popular dogmas might inquire, endlessly, as to my “position” on this issue or that issue or some other. Philosophies, as I conceive them at least, are not made of answers to issues, but of approaches more enduring and encompassing than that. By these approaches I have set down, I can seek and, I believe, find answers to the issues of 1958 or 1978, as they arise.

By personal choice, I am a Democrat, for I can in that party best apply and express my beliefs.

As for being anything else, the definitions of what I am will have to be applied by others as they see fit for I make no such distinctions myself.

I am, as I said in the beginning, a free man, an American, a United States Senator, and a Democrat, in that order, and there, for me, the classifying stops.

## AUTHOR'S FOREWORD TO THIS EDITION

When I originally wrote *The Lyndon Johnson Story*, I was lately departed from the employ of the subject of the book. It was a condition I conceived of as permanent in nature. Such, however, is the persuasiveness of the man who was to become the thirty-sixth President of the United States, and such, perhaps, is my own weakness in the face of an appeal that I am "needed," that by the time the book was published early in the year 1956 I again was on the office staff of Lyndon Baines Johnson. I remained there until the fall of 1958.

Thus, having worked, and worked happily, for almost six years for the man, I cannot pretend that this is an objective or definitive biography. It is, rather more unpretentiously, a setting down of some of the salient facts about an individual whom I grew to admire greatly. My admiration has increased during the years since I formally ceased to work for him.

In his foreword to the original edition, the subject of this narrative speaks of me as having once been a political enemy "who has become a personal friend." This is an accurate characterization, and one of which I am not ashamed on either count. In Lyndon Johnson's successful campaign in 1948 for the United States Senate, I was professionally and personally committed, and not lightly committed, to his opponent. My candidate lost and Lyn-

don Johnson won. The margin between victory and defeat was excruciatingly slight, but Lyndon Johnson won.

Not long thereafter I became slowly and somewhat incredulously aware that I was being "approached," that the new Senator from Texas was "interested" in me. His interest, flatteringly enough, grew out of his thought that I had done an adequate job for his opponent and that, given both the opportunity and the incentive, I might well do an adequate job for him. That is as may be.

In any event, I feel that through the years I came to know this man rather well and I came to have a profound respect for his ability, his force, his energy, and for the manner in which he sought to get at the root of any problem and then to act forthrightly and, if need be, aggressively to bring about an equitable solution to that problem.

Feeling this way, I could hardly be expected to write about him with complete objectivity or even with near-objectivity. I make no claim to having done so. Frankly and without apology, I consider him a great man for America in a time that cries aloud for greatness in our public figures.

In the frontier from which Lyndon Johnson's forebears so lately sprang there was a label that might be used approvingly of a man: "He'll do to go to the well with." This has a simple explanation. In the days of Indian warfare, a man did not unthoughtedly go alone to a source of water supply because the enemy habitually lurked there to attack the solitary wayfarer. So, if possible, one took along a companion, a man trustworthy and courageous, a man who would "do to go to the well with."

A man, indeed, like Lyndon Johnson.

## FOREWORD TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION

by Lyndon B. Johnson

I have always wondered why people say what they do when they write "forewords." It has been something of a mystery to me why forewords exist anyway. And I can think of nothing that would make even the most hardened extrovert more self-conscious than to write the foreword to a book about himself.

I have read enough forewords to know there are certain disclaimers that one must conventionally make. These usually appear in the first two or three paragraphs. In this field I am no trail-blazer and I therefore tread the traditional path. It so happens that while my disclaimers are conventional, they also are true.

This book is, then, no "authorized biography." At the age of forty-seven I am not yet old enough to feel the twinges (which I gather come eventually to every public man) to "set the record straight." I have always suspected, to put it bluntly, this means to make sure that the public man's side of the story is told as favorably as possible! Nor is it a habit of Texans to look back. We have a tradition of looking forward and not looking back to see where we have been or who is following us. There is time enough for that when we are gone.

I also accept the next conventional gambit, to be found in all standard "forewords." The subject of the biogra-

phy, after pointing out that it is not “authorized” and, even going so far as to pretend that he is really not interested in a book written about himself, then goes on to say that, nevertheless, the author knows what he is writing about.

This also happens to be true. Booth Mooney has recently been subjected to three years of living with Lyndon Johnson, under every sort of strain and under all circumstances. He was once one of my political enemies and has become my personal friend. Of this I am proud, and this, I think, is a pride a reasonable man may take pleasure in. Booth was a member of my staff in Washington for three years. Above and beyond that, he is a Texan steeped in the traditions of Texas, and with a writer’s eye for observing and understanding the effect upon and the bonds and the strength which the Lone Star State gives to her sons.

In short, he knows Texas, and he knows Washington, and, from personal experience, he knows that incredibly complex and extraordinarily superb invention of free democratic government—the United States Senate, of which I am at the moment Majority Leader.

I hope the reader will like this book. I have read it and I like it. I would have said a lot of things differently, much of it I would have taken out, for what are, essentially, I suppose, selfish reasons, and I would have stressed a number of other things which the author did not. But on the whole I liked it very much and I have long ago learned that Lyndon Johnson’s view of Lyndon Johnson is not really the right one or even the desirable one. I feel that if the book is at all out of perspective, it is because

Booth Mooney has been too kind. This is an error of friendship, the most easily forgiven of all the sins, and I know of no man in public life, including this one, who is so academic as to pitch a quarrel on such a pleasant ground as this.

Since I still have the Floor, there is one further word I want to say on behalf of Lyndon Johnson. It is no secret, I imagine, that I am a Democrat. I will always be one. It is, first of all, my heritage and my legacy from my forebears. All of the Johnsons and all of the Baineses have been Democrats from time immemorial.

But I feel quite strongly those of you who may happen to read this book and who do not know me, should understand that the fact I am a Democrat is not simply a matter of geography or birth or of Texas tradition. I admit I was born lucky but after 26 years of public life I have learned intellectually and from experience that it is lucky to be born a Democrat.

To put it simply, I am a Democrat by conviction. The Democratic Party has more to offer the successive generations of this nation than has the other party. Under its broad tent and flying banners people of many interests and many sections have always united and, I hope most fervently, will always be able to unite.

The other party has always been the party of a single interest. This single interest, by which I mean Business, is a legitimate interest, and it is one which has contributed mightily to the growth of the United States. It has a right to and deserves national representation. And there is room for it, or part of it, in the Democratic Party. But it can be only one of many interests. There its rights and privi-

leges, and its duties, are considered alongside those of the farmer and rancher, the working man and the various rights and aspirations of the different sections of the country, including, of course, those of Texas.

Lyndon B. Johnson

[1956]



This is a sad time for all people. We have suffered a loss that cannot be weighed.

For me, it is a deep personal tragedy. I know that the world shares the sorrow that Mrs. Kennedy and her family bear.

I will do my best. That is all I can do. I ask for your help, and God's.

Lyndon B. Johnson

November 22, 1963



# I

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The tall man, his face heavy with grief and shock, rested his hand on the leather covers of a Bible and repeated the words read in a trembling and almost inaudible voice by the gray-haired woman standing before him.

“I do solemnly swear that I will perform the duties of the President of the United States to the best of my ability and defend, protect and preserve the Constitution of the United States. So help me God.”

The simple ceremony made Lyndon Baines Johnson, one-time Texas farm boy and in his youth a school teacher, the President of the United States of America.

The date was November 22, 1963.

Less than two hours earlier, at one o'clock on a Friday afternoon, John Fitzgerald Kennedy had become the fourth American President to meet death at the hands of an assassin. From the window of a warehouse building near downtown Dallas, Texas, a sniper had fired two rifle bullets into the President's head and body as the Chief Executive sat in the White House car which had been flown from Washington for a parade through the streets of Dallas. President Kennedy never regained consciousness.

Only a month before, the President again had knocked

down the persistent rumor that Johnson would be “dumped” from the 1964 ticket and that Kennedy would choose another running mate. The President had stated strongly on several occasions that the ticket would be the same in 1964 as it had been in 1960, and at his most recent news conference he had returned an emphatic “Yes” to questions as to whether he wanted Johnson on the ticket and whether he expected Johnson would be on the ticket.

Lyndon Johnson took the oath of office in a private cabin on U.S. Air Force One, the plane of the President, as it sat on the concrete apron of Dallas’ Love Field. The plane that morning had brought the presidential party from nearby Fort Worth, where both the President and the Vice President had spent the preceding night.

The presidential oath was administered by U.S. District Judge Sarah T. Hughes, an old and valued friend of the Johnson family. She had been appointed to her judgeship by the martyred President just two years before.

On Johnson’s right as he stood in the rear cabin of the jet plane was his wife. On his left was the bereaved Mrs. Kennedy, who had said she wanted to be present for the ceremony. After repeating the words, “So help me God,” the new President kissed each woman gently on the cheek. He turned his sad face to look for a moment at the two dozen or so persons—several Congressmen who had come from Washington to be with Kennedy and Johnson during a two-day tour of Texas cities; members of the late President’s staff; a few news reporters—who had crowded into the small room.

The man all of them were watching drew a deep breath.

He squared his shoulders beneath the dark cloth of his jacket.

"All right," he said. "All right, let's get this plane back to Washington."

The spirit expressed by the words was characteristic.

Still stunned as he was by the murder of a man with whom he had vied for the Democratic nomination in 1960 and for whom during three years of working closely with him he had come to feel outspoken admiration and strong personal affection, Lyndon Johnson reacted with determination to face the indescribably grave responsibility that had fallen upon him. He shook off not his sorrow but the benumbing effects of that sorrow.

What he was to do now and in the future would be done because destiny had ruled it must be done.

The restless, driving Texan, three months past his fifty-fifth birthday, had been touched by destiny before, and on no less than three occasions fate appeared to have dealt him a knockout blow. But he had never been counted out.

The first time he ran for the United States Senate he was defeated. But he came back seven years later to run again, and successfully this time.

He made the Senate peculiarly his own institution and became the youngest, and at the same time the most effective, floor leader any political party ever had in that body. At the peak of his influence in the Senate, he was struck down by a heart attack that for a time threatened to take him out of politics forever. But he fought back to complete recovery.

In 1960 he hopefully went after the Democratic nom-

ination for President, but Kennedy won the nomination on the first ballot. Where that left Johnson no one could tell—for a few hours. Then it was announced that he had accepted the nominee's plea to join him on the ticket as candidate for Vice President.

Now, three years later, the crack of a rifle shot on an autumn day catapulted him into the Big Job—the biggest job in the world.

He came to it with the best training for the office of any Vice President in the nation's history.

His political knowledge was deep and sure. He had been in and of the political picture since 1931 when he gave up a school teacher's job to become secretary to a Congressman. His own service as a member of Congress, first in the House and then in the Senate, covered a period of twenty-four years. In the Senate he had been Majority Whip and Minority Floor Leader before being selected Majority Leader by his colleagues. During his three years as Vice President he had been brought deeply into the making of policy decisions of major import.

The new President was a superb politician, but he was more than that.

As Majority Leader of the Senate, he had been largely instrumental in bringing about congressional enactment of the first civil rights measures to be approved since the reconstruction days following the Civil War. It was he who set in motion the activity that sent the United States soaring into the new world of space. In the field of military affairs, his congressional career had been devoted in large part to prodding the military to eliminate waste and inefficiency and in prodding Congress to provide adequate

funds to keep the national strength at a high level. In the world, his influence had been thrown consistently behind efforts to increase commerce between nations and to improve relationships among peoples.

His efforts in all these areas made up part of the background that he brought to the presidency.

He had shown understanding of the problems of business and knowledgeable sympathy for the problems of labor. He was a lifelong Democrat with no prefix attached, and he believed wholeheartedly—as his friend and mentor, Speaker Sam Rayburn, had believed—that the American people were better served when the Democratic Party was in charge of the government than when the Republicans controlled. Yet in some matters, notably foreign affairs and military affairs, he could be objectively unpartisan. He considered waste, whether at home or abroad, the continuing enemy of civilization and he considered the prevention of waste—waste of resources, of human life, of opportunity—to be, in his own words, “the most dynamic of the responsibilities of government.”

Simultaneously one of the most complicated and one of the most plain-spoken men in public life, the new President possessed a roving, questing appetite for facts that could be proven and for opinions that would stand analysis. He probed into the minds of other men with a sharp incisiveness, restlessly seeking the ideas that would enable him to work, and work to good effect, fourteen, sixteen, eighteen hours a day. The men whose thoughts he drained might be left exhausted; he was revitalized.

By combining intense mental activity with sheer physical energy, he attained objectives that other men could

not reach. Members of his staff—some of them—wished—sometimes—that their boss would reach less ambitiously. They worked almost, if not quite, as hard as he did. Yet, although they complained at times, they had an unquestioning—and, if pressed the least bit, a fierce—loyalty to the man who tried to drive them as he drove himself.

One of the new President's great strengths was his ability to deal not only with complicated details but with complex, and often temperamental, human beings as well. This, indeed, was one of the vital factors that made him, in the words of former Vice President Richard M. Nixon, "one of the ablest political craftsmen of our times." Another Senate man, a Democrat, explained: "The secret is, Lyndon gives and takes. If you go along with him, he gives you a little here and there. Lyndon never forgets." He had developed this art of working with others to an exceedingly fine degree. Always a leader, he was also, and unfailingly, a team player.

He was supremely an activist, a man who believed in getting things done and getting those things done without undue delay. Yet he was not by nature a man of impulse, but rather a man of caution. His finger never reached instinctively for the panic button in times of stress. He considered. He pondered. He reasoned. He was a man of solid responsibility.

This was Lyndon Johnson, who spent his first few hours as President flying from Dallas, Texas, to Washington, D.C. After the red and white jet that was U.S. Air Force One had set down at Andrews Field, on the outskirts of the Capital City, President Johnson descended



from it to say, slowly and seriously, into an array of radio and television microphones :

“This is a sad time for all people. We have suffered a loss that cannot be weighed.

“For me, it is a deep personal tragedy. I know that the world shares the sorrow that Mrs. Kennedy and her family bear.

“I will do my best. That is all I can do. I ask for your help, and God’s.”

That short, necessary, and heartfelt statement out of the way, the President, with Mrs. Johnson beside him, walked, his face somber, toward the helicopter that was waiting to take him to the White House.

When he came down to earth again, in just a few moments, he would belong to himself no longer, but to the nation and the people.

## II

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In the early afternoon of Sunday, August 27, 1908, an elderly gentleman mounted a horse on his farm near the Texas town he had founded and that bore his name. Sitting straight in the saddle, he set out to call on his neighbors in the rural community. To each of them he gave the same solemn message :

“A United States Senator was born this morning—my grandson.”

The folks around Johnson City, Texas, knew Samuel Ealy Johnson, Sr. His word was good with them. So far as the homefolks were concerned, the destiny of the newest member of the Johnson family was set even before he had been given a name. Their faith was confirmed when the proud grandfather reiterated his judgment from time to time during the next few years, commenting to all who would listen on the boy's fine head, splendid eyes, precocity, determination and charm.

Lyndon Johnson was born to politics. His father served five terms in the Texas legislature. His maternal grandfather also saw service in the legislature as well as in the office of the Texas Secretary of State. His maternal grandmother was the niece of a man who signed the Texas Declaration of Independence from Mexico, fought in the freedom-winning Battle of San Jacinto, and became a

member of the First Congress of the Republic of Texas. One of that grandmother's uncles was a governor of Kentucky. Her forebears, back in the Old Country, for several generations represented their home district in the Scottish Parliament.

Sam Ealy Johnson, Jr., the father, was school teacher, farmer and legislator. He was first elected to the state legislature in 1904 when he was twenty-seven years old. He served two terms then and later was elected to three more two-year terms. During this latter service, which covered the period of World War I, he became well known in Texas as a result of a speech on tolerance he delivered in the House of Representatives. The speech was a burning plea that common sense and justice be applied to and combined with the wartime patriotism sweeping the country.

As a legislator, Sam Johnson was the author of numerous constructive measures. Early in his first term he successfully sponsored a bill appropriating funds to purchase the Alamo in San Antonio, shrine of Texas' war for independence. He wrote a bill providing for the erection of a home for the widows of Confederate veterans. He worked hard to help get farmers out of the mud with improved highways. He was a pioneer in leading the way to provide public funds to aid drought-stricken areas of the state.

One of Sam Johnson's early votes in the legislature was cast for a young man from Northeast Texas who wanted to be Speaker of the Texas House. The youngster got the job. His name was Sam Rayburn.

Sam Johnson was married in August, 1907, to Rebekah Baines. She was the daughter of Joseph W. Baines, John-

son's predecessor as a representative in the state legislature. Sam had courted Rebekah by taking her to reunions of Confederate veterans to hear the oratory of Senators Joe Bailey and Charlie Culberson and Governor Tom Campbell. Once the young legislator had invited her to hear William Jennings Bryan orate with his free-silver tongue before the Texas legislature.

"Sam was enchanted," his wife said years later, "to find a girl who really liked politics."

Rebekah, a staunch and determined young woman who worked her way through her final year at Baylor College after her father suffered financial reverses, had been teaching classes in "expression" in Fredericksburg, county seat of Gillespie County. After their marriage, the couple moved out to the Johnson farm on the Pedernales River. It was there a year later that their first child, the one acclaimed by Grandpa Johnson as a future Senator, was born.

In the ancestral background of Lyndon Johnson were public servants, ministers, cattlemen, journalists, planters, schoolteachers, a college president, a co-founder of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

His grandfather, Samuel Ealy Johnson, Sr., was born in 1838 in Alabama, the tenth child of Jesse Johnson and Lucy Webb Barnett Johnson. Samuel Ealy's parents lived in Georgia most of their lives, moving to Texas in 1846. After the father died ten years later, young Sam and his brother Tom set themselves up in the cattle business. They bought cattle and pastured them in Gillespie County before driving them on to Kansas markets. In the late 'fifties the brothers established headquarters at what is

now Johnson City. It was the first settlement in that section.

Samuel Ealy Johnson served through the Civil War. He was married in 1867 to Eliza Bunton, daughter of Robert Holmes Bunton and Jane MacIntosh Bunton. Eliza Bunton Johnson was a niece of John Wheeler Bunton, signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the Republic of Texas. It was he who served in the Republic's First Congress. It was another of Eliza's cousins, Mary Desha, who was co-founder of the DAR.

Rebekah Baines' father, Joseph Wilson Baines, was born in Louisiana in the middle 1840's, but was brought up and educated in Texas. He served in the Civil War. Schoolteacher and lawyer, he also established a weekly newspaper in McKinney, then later was Secretary of State and member of the legislature.

His father, George W. Baines, Sr., was a Baptist minister in Arkansas, Louisiana and, finally, Texas. He also served in a state legislature, that of Arkansas. He was editor of the first Baptist paper to be published in Texas. He became president of the denominational college, Baylor University, in 1861, resigning the following year because of ill health. George Baines was a good friend of the legendary Sam Houston.

Whatever else Lyndon Johnson inherited from these ancestors, he was without question bequeathed an enormous store of physical energy. According to his mother and others who knew him early, he was a dynamo from childhood.

He was a happy, active and healthy child. There were

many things to do on a farm. Lyndon did them all. Under the watchful eye of a mother who had a dedicated sense of parental responsibility and under the careful guidance of a proud and intelligent father, the boy grew as fast as the jackrabbits that loped over the hills.

He was active mentally as well as physically. His mother began early to tell him stories from the Bible, history and mythology. Lyndon liked best the stories of actual occurrences. "Is it true?" he would demand of his mother. "Did it actually happen, Mama?"

Rebekah Baines Johnson taught him the alphabet from A-B-C blocks before he was two. By the time he was three he could recite all the Mother Goose rhymes and poems from Longfellow and Tennyson. At four he was reading for himself.

When he started to school at the age of five, however, it could not be said that he took readily to books. There were many things to do besides study and they were all more attractive.

Old report cards showed that his school grades generally were good, except in "deportment" where a "B" was as high as he could rise. His grades were due more to the persistence of his mother than to his own eagerness to learn. She knew she had a determined son, but her own determination was not in short supply. For every artifice Lyndon set up to dodge his studies, she found another that was effective in making him learn.

"Many times," she said, "I would not catch up with the fact that Lyndon was not prepared on a lesson until breakfast time of a school day. Then I would get the book and put it on the table in front of his father and devote

the whole breakfast period to a discussion with my husband of what my son should have learned the night before.

“Lyndon was too well trained to interrupt adult table talk. Forced to listen, he would learn. That way, and by following him to the front gate nearly every morning and telling him tales of history and geography and algebra, I could see that he was prepared for the work of the day.”

In spite of the necessity of force-feeding knowledge to him, the parents were pleased with the way the boy developed initiative and resourcefulness. He rode the few miles to school on his own pony. He had a group of friends, all older than he, and he often brought one home to spend the night. He took very seriously his position as the oldest of the family of five children.

Lyndon was graduated from the Johnson City high school in the spring of 1924. He was president of his class of seven members. He and a friend won the debate competition in the county interscholastic league that year.

Graduation from high school meant to him a happy release from years of drudgery. He had no thought of college. He was finished with books. He wanted to get out into the world. He felt that he was a man, which he indeed was in height, having sprung up to more than six feet, although he was as skinny as a country telephone pole.

His parents were eager for him to attend college. He did not share their feeling. Just to make sure there would be no more talk of it, he organized five of his friends into an expedition to California. It could have been called running away from home.

The boy learned a great deal during the few months he was in California. He and his friends soon ran out of money. They separated to hunt jobs.

"That was the first time I went on a diet," he reported later. "Nothing to eat was the principal item on my food chart. Up and down the coast I tramped, washing dishes, waiting on tables, doing farmwork when it was available, and always growing thinner and more homesick."

There was a solution, of course, and that was to work and hitchhike his way back toward Texas and Johnson City. That is what the long, lanky youth finally did. He was very happy to get back home, but he still had no idea of going to college.

He landed a job on a road gang near Johnson City. He shoveled gravel and drove a truck and pushed a wheelbarrow. He grew calluses on his hands and did a reasonable amount of helling around on Saturday nights.

His mother, with characteristic persistence, pressed home to him at every opportunity the fact that work was honorable, whether with the hands or with the head. "But," she added, "education opens up everything."

Sam Johnson talked to his son about his job. "It's fine to be satisfied with the simple things. A man who is satisfied to be a laborer will never have much on his mind. Of course there won't be much *in* it either, but a man who is willing to devote all his life to a road job really doesn't need much."

Such talk eventually had its effect. So did the grinding monotony of the work the youngster was doing.

One raw, cold evening, Lyndon came home from an especially hard day on the highway and announced, "I'm sick of working just with my hands. I don't know if I can



work with my brain, but I'm ready to try. Mama, if you and Daddy can get me in college, I'll go as soon as I can."

His mother walked immediately to the telephone and called a family friend who was an official of Southwest Texas State Teachers College at San Marcos, a town some forty miles distant from Austin, the state capital. She arranged right then for her son to enter the college at the beginning of the next semester. That was in February, 1927.

There was little money. Lyndon went to the Johnson City bank and borrowed seventy-five dollars on his own note to get started. At the college he got a job as janitor. Disliking the work, he set out to shorten as much as he could the time he would have to do it. He had no intention of spending four years in getting his degree. He was through with wasting time.

The young man who had scorned higher education now soaked up knowledge furiously. Working alone after other students had left, he recited his lessons aloud. He practiced oratory in the halls he swept. He learned to do the janitorial chores faster than they had ever been done before and used the time he saved to take on another job as secretary to the college president—and to study constantly.

Even then not all his energy was consumed. As many youths of his age turn to sports, he turned to debate and campus politics. He became the college's star debater. He had his first success in the political field when he organized a new faction, which he labeled the "White Stars," to wrest control of campus politics from the entrenched, athlete-dominated "Black Stars."

He edited the college newspaper and was a leader in

numerous extra-curricular activities. His mother's family album contained a snapshot of this period picturing the student with his debating partner and debating coach. The faded print shows a long-legged youngster, his thin face bent studiously over a table as he made notes—perhaps for a future debate. He looks intensely solemn.

His college grades were excellent. He made numerous friends who would stay with him through the years.

Lyndon Johnson received his degree from Southwest Texas State Teachers College in August, 1930, when he was twenty-two years old. That was three and one-half years after he had entered the school. During this time he had completed three months of pre-college work and four full years of college work—and had taken time out to make needed money by teaching school one year in a small town in South Texas.

After his graduation from college, he joined the faculty of a high school in Houston to teach public speaking and debate. The school had many Latin-American students. Conflicts arose at times between them and the Anglo pupils. In ironing out these differences, the young teacher used and developed his talent for influencing people to get along among themselves.

He liked teaching and was good at it. The debate teams he advanced won honors for themselves in state competitions. He was popular with his students and with other faculty members.

But the family tradition of politics was much on his mind. When the opportunity came, late in the year 1931, to go to Washington as secretary to a Texas congressman, he jumped at it. One way or another, after that, he was always in politics.

### III

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His entrance on the Washington scene was made under the aegis of Congressman Richard M. Kleberg, one of the owners of the fabulous King Ranch of Texas. Kleberg, wealthy and conservative in the Texas tradition, had been elected to the House of Representatives in a special election in November, 1931. Johnson had participated in Kleberg's campaign with speech-making and personal work with the voters, and the rancher had taken a fancy to the aggressive youngster.

It was a yeasty period of change in the nation's capital, a great time for a young, intelligent, politically-minded man to be in Washington. Especially if he were a Democrat.

Herbert Hoover was in the White House and the Republicans still controlled the Senate, but the Democrats were in control, by a small majority, of the House of Representatives. Political observers took it for granted that the Hoover Administration would be swept completely out of power in the 1932 general election. The Democrats were making big plans for the time when they would finish taking over the government. Already, new Federal agencies were being set up in an effort to check the disastrous economic depression that had the country in its grip.

This milieu of exciting ideas and excited people was just right for Johnson. He realized at once that Washington was the place for him. He embarked on a studied effort to make it his town.

Arthur Perry, an old Washington hand who at that time was secretary to Senator Tom Connally of Texas and already well versed in the ways of Capitol Hill, recalled that the newcomer made quite an impact on the group of established congressional secretaries.

"I remember when Dick Kleberg brought Lyndon around to our office and told me he wished I would teach his new secretary everything I knew and show him how to find his way around Washington," Perry said. "Lyndon started asking questions as soon as he knew my name. He followed the same procedure with everyone else he met. He was out to learn all he could and learn it fast."

He did learn fast.

"You never had to tell him anything a second time," Perry said. "This skinny boy was as green as anybody could be, but within a few months he knew how to operate in Washington better than some who had been here for twenty years before him."

Johnson, Perry and many other young men working as secretaries to congressmen lived in the Dodge Hotel on Capitol Hill. They were never far away from their jobs, in either body or spirit. When they were not actually at work, they were thinking or talking about work.

Their ideas were as divergent as those of their bosses. Their minds were eager and absorbent. They debated political issues at their meals, raised their voices in defense and in condemnation as they walked the few blocks

from their offices to the hotel, crowded one another's rooms at night to express strong opinions on the state of the American government.

Lyndon Johnson was usually to be found in the midst of the group where arms were being waved most wildly and the talk was most violent. He did his full share of the talking. He did more than his share of listening.

"When a group of us went to the cafeteria for lunch," Arthur Perry reported of that time, "Lyndon would be at the head of the line. He would grab a tray and pick out the food he wanted, hurry to a table and start wolfing his meal. Often—usually—by the time the rest of us reached the table he would have finished eating.

"That left him free to shoot questions at us while we ate. If he didn't like the answers he got, he would argue. Lyndon was the greatest argufier any of us had ever seen. It took me a long time to catch on to the fact that most of his arguing was done simply to bring out every possible answer to his arguments. He wanted to be sure he knew all the answers."

Johnson made friends. He was personable and gregarious. In argument, he could be devastating. In friendly conversation, he could be irresistible. Nor was his standing on "The Hill" damaged by the fact that his father's old friend, Sam Rayburn, rising to power in the House of Representatives, had taken him under his wing.

The congressional secretaries had their own organization, which they called the "Little Congress." Johnson had been in Washington for only a year when someone suggested casually that he offer himself as a candidate for Speaker of the Little Congress. The suggestion was hardly

meant seriously, for the miniature congress, like the regular one, operated under a rigid seniority system. New-comers were supposed to listen and learn, just as was the custom for freshman members of the actual Congress.

The suggestion was no joke to the new secretary from Texas. He ran for the office and won it. He achieved the victory by the simple method of enlisting the aid of a few friends in signing up for membership the congressional secretaries who had never before bothered to participate in the affairs of the Little Congress. Naturally, these new members were pledged to support Lyndon Johnson for Speaker. They swamped the entrenched Old Guard.

The New Deal was in full swing. Johnson loved the heady atmosphere of Washington as experiments with new concepts of government swept on. Like many other Americans, the Texan had a new hero in Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In those days, when all around him men were making the world over every morning before breakfast, was born Johnson's scorn of what he called "cain't do men." He saw many things done that timid men had said could not possibly be accomplished.

To be sure, his own official role in those events was bound by the confines of one congressional office. But he went to Dick Kleberg's office early and stayed there late. He learned all there was to know about running a congressman's office: how to get things done for the folks back home; how to deal effectively with the government bureaus; how to get jobs for constituents and how to leave them feeling friendly toward their congressman when jobs were unobtainable.

He learned, too, who was powerful and therefore im-

portant in Congress, and how the powerful ones got that way. He saw at first hand how much it meant to attain seniority as a member of Congress. He absorbed knowledge from the wise and experienced Sam Rayburn, and always he was everywhere asking questions.

Johnson got back to Texas for visits from time to time. He was in Austin in September, 1934, when he met the girl he knew at once he wanted to marry. Her name was Claudia Taylor, but a nurse had nicknamed her "Lady Bird" when she was a baby and Lady Bird she remained. She was the bright, charming and very pretty daughter of a well-to-do East Texas landowner and businessman.

Typically, Johnson asked her for a date only minutes after they had met. He had made up his mind. He saw no need for wasting time. But Miss Taylor was going back home to Marshall that night, so she declined.

Back in Washington he proceeded to lay down a barrage of telegrams, long distance telephone calls and letters. It was two months before he was able to get back to Texas. He at last had his date with Lady Bird and talked her into marrying him.

"Sometimes," his wife said reminiscently, some years later, "Lyndon simply takes your breath away."

They were married November 17, 1934, and went to Mexico for their honeymoon. By the time they set up housekeeping in Washington, the fast-talking Texan knew he had won a double prize. He not only had the one possible wife for Lyndon Johnson but also had the ideal helpmate for a going-places politician.

The couple barely had time to get well settled in Washington before they were on the move again. In August,

1935, a few days before his twenty-seventh birthday, Johnson was appointed State Administrator for Texas of the National Youth Administration.

The NYA was one of the stars in the New Deal crown. Its purpose was as simple as it was praiseworthy: to get young Americans off the street corners and highways and put them to work, either in school or at jobs. In that depression-ridden time, thousands of youngsters were idle and without hope, many of them constituting a threat rather than a promise to the future of the United States.

Since coming to Washington, Johnson had given much effort to helping his former pupils and college classmates. He had arranged for a number of them to obtain jobs in the capital. He had helped others to get work enabling them to attend college in Texas. He was a natural leader of young people.

Johnson was the youngest NYA State Administrator in the country. He was determined to be the best one. When he got off a plane in Austin to embark on his new work, he told newspaper reporters, "As I see it, my job is to work myself out of a job."

His efforts brought him his first taste of national fame. The organization he built in Texas was used as a model by many other states. He put thousands of youngsters to work on such projects as playgrounds, highway roadside parks and soil conservation. He pleaded the merits of his boys and girls to private employers. He urged college officials to see that their NYA apportionments were used effectively to give deserving and needy students a chance to complete their education.

In Texas, the National Youth Administration became



a factor in the lives of some thirty thousand young men and women. Of these, eighteen thousand were given assistance in getting through high school and college; the other twelve thousand obtained jobs of one kind or another through the NYA.

"Those were the great days," Johnson said later. "Those kids came into the units as we established them, railing at fortune and circumstance and cowed by the economic conditions that had left them without jobs or the hope of jobs. After they came to us, their scowls were changed to smiles.

"For a time after we began to work I tried to be the first person on the job every morning, but I found that I had just set up a contest. They were as anxious to get there as I was. They were as anxious to show me that all they had lacked was opportunity as I was anxious to have them show it.

"Skills grew with practice. Opportunities came to them as they perfected these skills. If the Roosevelt Administration had never done another thing, it would have been justified by the work of this great institution for salvaging youth."

It was this attitude toward his work that earned for him from the National Director of the NYA the accolade that the young Texan did the best job of any State Administrator.

Naturally, Johnson derived immense personal satisfaction from his job. From the time he started his career as a schoolteacher he had a deep-rooted desire to do things for the young people of Texas. He was a man who had faith in what he was doing.

He received an uncalculated extra dividend from his work with the NYA. In doing that work, he built for himself a strong and lasting foundation of political strength.

It could hardly have been otherwise. Within a year after Johnson had assumed the post of State Administrator for the NYA, there were thousands of young Texans who called him "Lyn" and regarded him as personally responsible for their economic salvation. This was no mean asset for a man who liked people for themselves, to be sure, but who also was consciously on the lookout for the political main chance.

Early in 1937 the chance came. Representative James P. Buchanan of Johnson's Central Texas congressional district died. A special election was called to name his successor. It would be a "sudden death" election. No matter how many candidates entered, the one obtaining the largest number of votes would win; a majority of all votes cast was not necessary for victory.

Johnson resigned his NYA job to become a candidate for Buchanan's unfinished term. There were nine other candidates, several of them much better known than Johnson. They had more money for campaigning. They had the backing of the political conservatives, who were shying away from a continuation of New Deal policies. Newspaper comment at the time of Johnson's announcement of his candidacy revealed that he was not considered a serious contender.

The young candidate's platform was for the most part couched in exceedingly general terms. He said he stood for "a decent living" for every American citizen. He

called for policies that would give farmers and ranchers equal opportunity with other occupational groups "for recovery and progress." He declared that he favored "the right of labor to have work" as well as "a sound national program to support and develop business."

That was all very well so far as it went. Johnson understood clearly that it did not go far enough to insure victory for him. What he had to do, he knew, was to dramatize his candidacy and get people to talking about him.

A short time before, Roosevelt had announced his plan to "pack" the Supreme Court. The proposal had aroused tremendous controversy, with many articulate Texans and organs of public opinion strongly opposed to it. Johnson added support of Roosevelt's Court plan to his New Deal platform.

In his opening speech at San Marcos, site of his college days, he delivered his challenge :

"If the people of this district are for bettering the lot of the common man; if the people of this district want to run their government rather than have a dollar man run it for them; if the people of this district want to support Roosevelt on his most vital issue, I want to be your congressman.

"But if the people of this district don't want to support Roosevelt, I'll be content to let some corporation lawyer or lobbyist represent them."

He shrewdly made it clear to the voters of the district that they were in the national spotlight, that the decision they were called upon to make was of the most solemn and far-reaching import.

“This,” he pointed out, “is a local campaign for the election of a congressman in the heart of a Democratic state, a campaign of such importance and magnitude that the eyes of the nation are focused upon us. This national issue which you will vote on is commanding the keen attention of the people throughout the country.”

The immediate result of this was one Johnson had foreseen. The other candidates, who had stated their opposition to the Court plan, turned their fire on him. With all of them talking about him, he was getting more publicity than any other candidate. With all of them declaring their conservatism in even stronger terms, he was lining up virtually all of the hard-and-fast New Deal vote.

In addition to these advantages, he worked harder than anyone else. His rangy form turned up in towns and communities in all the ten counties of the Tenth Congressional District. He was at his campaigning day and night. So was Lady Bird. So were all the energetic and enthusiastic young friends he had made during his work with the NYA—and their families and the friends of their families.

Throughout the district people were working to elect this young man to Congress simply because someone they knew had written them and asked their assistance. It was the kind of snowballing of support that was to serve Johnson well in every political race of his career.

Two days before the election, the candidate entered an Austin hospital for an emergency appendectomy. He was in his hospital bed when the returns came in the night of April 10, 1937.

He had almost twice as many votes as his nearest opponent.

The day after the election Johnson issued a statement in which he said : "I'm not going to get up and make a lot of speeches this first term. I don't believe I can set the world on fire and go up there and reform the United States of America right away."

## IV

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The freshman started his congressional service with the warmth of Franklin D. Roosevelt's personal good will.

At the time of Johnson's success at the polls, the President happened to be on a cruise in the Gulf of Mexico off the Texas coast. He let it be known that he wanted to have a talk with this young man who had marched so successfully behind the New Deal banner in a state where there were rumblings of dissatisfaction among Democrats.

When the presidential craft docked at Galveston, Johnson was brought aboard and introduced to Roosevelt by his warm personal friend, Texas Governor James V. Allred. (For some unexplained reason, both Johnson and Allred were wearing Hawaiian orchids in their coat lapels.) Roosevelt then invited Johnson to ride with him through Texas on the President's special train. On that trip Johnson told the President all about the kind of campaign he had waged. He managed, characteristically, to get in a few words about the importance of two big unfinished dam projects in his congressional district.

The Texan made no fight against succumbing to the famed Rooseveltian charm.

"He was a great man and you knew it five minutes

after you first met him," Johnson told a friend afterward. "He caused you to feel you wanted to do what he wanted you to do. And he had about the quickest mind of any man I've ever known. It was hard to keep up with him in conversation. He was always a jump or two ahead."

Johnson was making an impression of his own. Before he left the train, Roosevelt suggested that he might be "a good man to help out with naval matters" in Congress. The Navy was, of course, the President's prime darling and he was always on the lookout for opportunities of winning friends and influencing congressmen in its favor.

"Here's a telephone number," the President told the young congressman-elect near the end of their train ride together. "When you get to Washington, call it and ask for Tom. Tell him what we've talked about."

This "Tom" was Tom Corcoran, the famed and ebullient Tommy the Cork, who was such a great power in the early days of the New Deal. Once in Washington, Johnson wasted no time in getting in touch with him.

Johnson was sworn in as a member of Congress by Speaker William B. Bankhead on May 14, 1937. A few days later, as he stood in the rear of the House chamber, one of the great men of the House of Representatives, Carl Vinson of Georgia, Chairman of the powerful Naval Affairs Committee, came up to him.

"Young man," the Georgian drawled, "I am indebted to you for a good dinner and an excellent conversation."

Johnson looked at him with surprise.

"I was invited to the White House for dinner," Vinson continued, "and the President was, as always, a most

delightful host. I kept wondering just what it was he wanted from me. I knew it was something. Finally, he said casually—oh, very casually—, ‘Carl, there’s a fine young man just come to the House, and I think he would be a great help on Naval Affairs.’ He meant the committee, you know.”

As the two stood there, the “fine young man” still not fully understanding, the droning voice of the Clerk of the House announced the appointment of Johnson of Texas to the Naval Affairs Committee. It was an assignment of a kind not often given a new member. And it was only the first of many good turns done Johnson by his friend in the White House.

Grateful though he was to the President for his interest and firm as ever in his conviction that Roosevelt was truly a great man, the new congressman soon showed that he had no intention of acting as a rubber stamp of approval for Administration proposals. He had a mind of his own. He was not a man to be swayed from his convictions by personal charm, no matter how potent.

A few weeks after he assumed his seat, the House had up for consideration the President’s veto of a bill to extend low interest rates on Federal farm land loans for another year. Sam Rayburn, who had been named House Majority Leader at the beginning of the session, took the floor to appeal that the veto be sustained. Johnson nevertheless voted to override.

It was not an easy thing to do, this going against the wishes of both the President and Rayburn, his good friend and political godfather. But Johnson’s reasoning was logical enough. He simply was convinced that the low inter-



est rates were needed by farmers generally and by the farmers of his own district in particular.

The Tenth Congressional District of Texas was always first in his thoughts. He regarded himself as its servant, working in the House of Representatives to protect its interests. And, of course, as a matter of practical politics there was wisdom in doing everything for his district that he possibly could do.

As things turned out, he could do a great deal.

In his first two years in office, Johnson had the distinction of securing probably more Federal projects for his district than any other member of Congress was able to get.

His first efforts were directed at obtaining Federal financing for the multi-million-dollar Lower Colorado River Authority of Texas as a public works project. He was determined that cheap public power should be made available in connection with flood control and reclamation on the Colorado River.

The "power trust" was a favorite target of the New Deal. Johnson joined wholeheartedly in the fight against it. He was a fervent advocate of the program of the recently established Rural Electrification Administration.

"The farmer's income is low and some way must be worked out to bring it back to a normal and reasonable level," he argued. "While we are trying to do that, there is no reason why the farmer should not have electricity at cheap prices now. He needs it to help him with his work, make his home a better and more comfortable place to live, and to give him the opportunities available to city folks."

Congressman Johnson had not forgotten his boyhood days on the farm, where the family used kerosene for lighting, his mother did the laundry in zinc tubs and he and his brother pumped water by hand. "So far as electric power was concerned," he declared, "we were no better off than my grandfather had been when he lived on that same farm."

Announcement was made in January, 1939, that the Central Texas empire of public-owned electric utilities had become a reality with the execution of a contract for purchase by the Lower Colorado River Authority of properties owned by a private company in a sixteen-county area. Most of the area was included in Johnson's district.

There had been hard fights along the way. Once, at a meeting between Johnson and directors of the LCRA and officials of a private power company, the Congressman had flared up and told the utility president to go to hell. That ended the meeting.

Afterwards, Alvin J. Wirtz, then general counsel of the Lower Colorado River Authority and a personal friend whose seasoned judgment Johnson deeply respected, asked the young firebrand to come by his office. Johnson expected that Wirtz wanted to do as the other LCRA directors had done, to shake his hand and congratulate him warmly on his fighting spirit. But that was not the older man's purpose.

"Listen, Lyndon," he said when the two were closeted in his office. "I've been around this business a long time. I know it must have made you feel good when those other fellows told you what a great man you are for advising

the president of a big, powerful utility company to go to hell. But it broke up the meeting, you know. We still have to settle the issues we called the meeting to discuss.

"I learned one thing a long time ago, Lyndon," Wirtz added. "You can tell a man to go to hell easy enough—but he doesn't have to go."

Johnson never forgot that lesson nor Alvin Wirtz either. Early in 1940 he was responsible for Wirtz' appointment as Under Secretary of the Interior, an office in which Wirtz served with the distinction that marked his entire career.

When Johnson first started pushing the plan to provide cheap electricity for farmers and other residents of Central Texas, Washington officials of the Rural Electrification Administration told him his program was too grandiose. "You want everything," they told him, "and all we can possibly do is think about giving you something."

Such words were a challenge to a man who looked for ways to do things rather than ways not to do them. He went ahead.

One result of his fight for extension of electric service to rural homes was the establishment in his own district of the biggest rural electrification project in the world. Rates paid by farmers for electric power were slashed 25 per cent. Their use of electricity zoomed and the resulting benefits were plain.

Some of Johnson's own friends in Texas warned him, when he began his fight for rural electrification, that farmers could never be educated to use and pay for electricity. The Congressman replied with a standing offer

of a Stetson hat, that unique Texas status symbol, to any person who could show him a rural electrification project where the farmers had not jumped at the chance to have electricity brought to their homes.

"I never lost a hat on REA!" was his proud boast.

A side result of his work in this field was an offer from Roosevelt of the job of REA Administrator for the nation. The President was well aware of the accomplishments of this protégé from Texas. Johnson declined with thanks, explaining he felt he had a contract with the people of his district to serve them in Congress and he aimed to live up to the contract. The offer, however, did nothing to lessen his growing prestige.

To the people of the Tenth District he was "the man who gets the job done." He threw his strength behind community efforts to obtain funds for new post office buildings for numerous towns. He worked for the establishment of Federal soil conservation projects in his district. He supported farm credit expansion and fought for lower freight rates for the Southwest. He continued to back such youth assistance projects as the NYA and the Civilian Conservation Corps.

One Christmastime some friends in Austin took him on a tour through a slum area of that state capital. Johnson was horrified to see the conditions in which the people of the area—mostly Negroes and Mexicans—were living. He went back to Washington determined to get something done about the matter, and he was able to persuade Congress to earmark half a million dollars for a public housing project in Texas.

He found that Negro farmers were often overlooked

in the administration of the various New Deal efforts to put agriculture back on its feet. He went to work to correct the situation. Milo Perkins, assistant administrator of the Farm Securities Administration in the late 'thirties, said of Johnson, "He was the first man in Congress from the South ever to go to bat for the Negro farmer."

No proper request from an individual constituent was too trivial for Johnson to give it his personal attention. He laid down a rule for his staff that every letter received must be answered within twenty-four hours. When the work grew too heavy for the staff allowed his congressional office, he hired additional personnel and paid them from his own funds. He worked and his employees worked ten, twelve, fifteen hours a day.

"Lyndon was a real pusher," recalled a friend who watched Johnson's career from its beginning. "In those days he was maybe a little too cocky and sometimes he made people sore. He didn't develop his smoothness until later, but he did get things done.

"His gangling figure was everywhere on Capitol Hill. He knew more members of Congress and more congressional secretaries than men who had been around Washington for years. He was a sharp trader and he knew how to get what he wanted. Even then, when he really turned on the charm it took a tough customer to stand up against him.

"People who knew Lyndon then were never surprised at his later successes. If there ever was a prototype of a young man going somewhere in politics, it was Lyndon Johnson during his first few years in Congress."

Johnson simply applied what he had learned as a con-

gressional secretary about the mechanics of getting things done in Washington—and he was not without certain unusual advantages.

He had ready access to the White House. The President liked him and, in addition, Grace Tully, Roosevelt's personal secretary, took a fancy to the Texan and made it easy for him to get the presidential ear. He could always count on Rayburn for assistance when it was needed. Wright Patman, another veteran Texas congressman who had served with Johnson's father in the Texas legislature, was also very helpful. Too, Johnson had become a prize pupil of Carl Vinson on the Naval Affairs Committee.

As war clouds broke over Europe and the United States began to look more closely to its own defenses, Johnson's position on that committee became increasingly important, his personal influence steadily more potent. He did more than any other one man to bring about the construction in Corpus Christi, Texas, of a tremendous naval air training base. It was his hand that guided the Administration in designating the Texas cities of Houston and Orange as sites for shipbuilding yards. He played an active part in the establishment of a Naval ROTC unit at the University of Texas and a Naval Reserve Station in Dallas.

These defense projects were not located in his congressional district. But in each case, Johnson considered, the city was a logical place for the particular activity set up there.

He was convinced that the United States would not be able to avoid becoming involved in the war. He knew the

nation was far from ready, and he wanted to do anything he could to help it get ready. He was anxious for his own state to make every possible contribution.

Feeling this way about the immediate future, he was one who considered it essential that Roosevelt be nominated for an unprecedented third term as President.

Not all Texans agreed with him. In fact, there was strong sentiment in Texas for the nomination of the state's own John Nance Garner, the conservative rancher who was Vice President during Roosevelt's first two terms. The Garner movement was an implicit threat to the unity of the Democratic Party in Texas.

Johnson admired and respected the Vice President. Many of his own friends favored Garner for the nomination. But the congressman from the Tenth District felt that in the troubled year of 1940, as perhaps never before in the nation's history, a split among Democrats would be tragic.

He and Rayburn talked the matter over and then consulted with Roosevelt. After gaining his approval, they proceeded to work out an agreement with the Texan's backers that the state convention delegation would be instructed in favor of Garner for President—with the provision that the delegation would be pledged not to join any stop-Roosevelt movement.

Typically, Johnson remained on the best of terms with both sides of the potential controversy, averted by this agreement. He was one of the few men in the country who was trusted by the Garner people at the same time that he was a favorite of President Roosevelt.

The gentleman from Texas found work to do in the

congressional campaigns of 1940. The Republicans needed to gain only forty-eight seats to capture control of the House of Representatives. A few weeks before the election, it looked very much as if they would get them, maybe more.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee was in a state of near-collapse. Activity had slowed down to such an extent that hard-pressed candidates over the country hardly bothered to ask the committee for help. Some of the people around committee headquarters were ready to throw in the towel.

Realistic and hardheaded Sam Rayburn (who had become Speaker of the House in September of that year, after William Bankhead's death) and Democratic Floor Leader John W. McCormack of Massachusetts went to Roosevelt and told him bluntly that something had to be done, and at once. The President asked for suggestions. His advisers had one ready. It was that Lyndon Johnson be put in charge of the campaign committee.

The next morning Johnson was in charge. He had a secluded office and no official title. His only instructions were to elect Democrats to Congress. He imparted his own enthusiasm and sense of urgency to an enlarged staff. He and the staff worked long hours daily during the remaining three weeks of the campaign.

The results spoke for themselves. The Democrats came out of the election stronger than ever. Instead of capturing the House, the Republicans actually lost six seats.

Johnson had been responsible for actively assisting more than 150 Democratic candidates for Congress. The successful candidates were not likely, considering the



you-scratch-my-back-and-I'll-scratch-yours nature of the business of politics, to forget the help that had been given them.

As for his own re-election, there was no difficulty about that. He had been named to his first full term in Congress in 1938 without opposition. He was re-elected in 1940, again without an opponent.

As the "phony war" in Europe was succeeded by a terrifyingly unbroken string of Nazi victories, Johnson began a series of warnings to all who would listen that the United States was lagging behind in its preparedness program. His closeness to Roosevelt and other high figures in the Administration made him keenly aware of how far short the country was falling of the certain future need.

In an address before the Texas legislature in April, 1941, he earnestly challenged all elements in American life to join in subordinating every other consideration to accomplishing as rapidly as possible the gigantic task of getting ready for war.

He spoke with an eloquence unusual for him.

"How much time do we have to get ready?" he asked.

"The truth is," he answered himself, "we don't have any time.

"We don't know, in days, hours, weeks and months, when this hurricane may come to us. When we lose a minute wrangling among ourselves, we lose something that all the gold at Fort Knox, Kentucky, can't buy back. With every second wasted, we rush one step nearer universal disaster.

"I come to you today as a friend of American labor. But to labor I want to say this: When you vote to strike,

you must think not only of your liberties but also of those superior liberties of every citizen of your country. You must think of your government and what it requires to save you and your precious rights.

“I have been the friend of business and industry. Still there are privileges superior to yours and above those of any other minority in America. Your government can call on you and you are bound to respond when it must defend you and your precious advantages.

“I have fought a long battle for the farmers. But to farmers I say: Government can call on you, too, and you must answer.

“The security of the whole country is above that of any single group—labor, capital or farmer. When, in the scramble to save yourselves individually, all you minorities become willing to sacrifice the whole people for yourselves, you will jump the trap of your own gallows.

“We cannot be free men and, at the same time, disorganized men, bull-headed, obstinate, selfish men.”

The joint session of the Texas legislature gave him an ovation.

The next day, back in Washington, Johnson called on Roosevelt at the White House a few moments before the President was to hold a press conference. The Texan emerged with an announcement that he was a candidate for the unexpired term of Senator Morris Sheppard, who had died April 9. He read the announcement from the steps of the White House.

A few minutes-later, at the President's news conference, Roosevelt was asked for comment on the Johnson

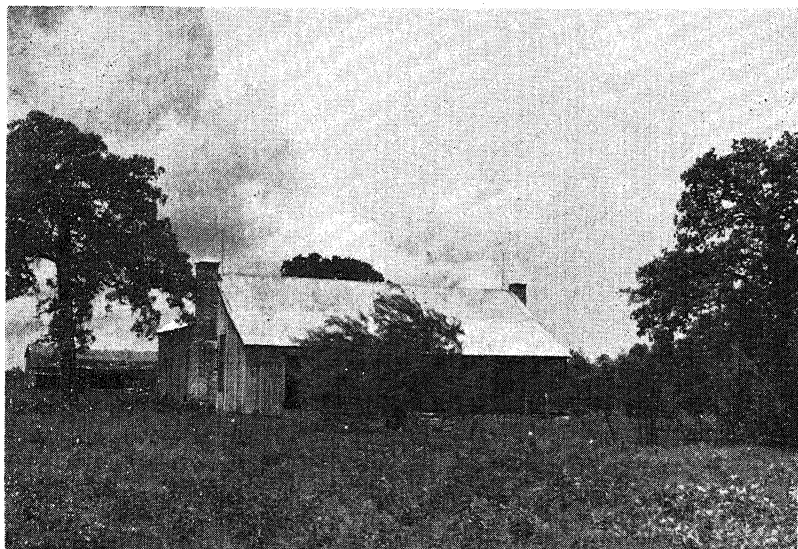


The First Lady



*United Press*

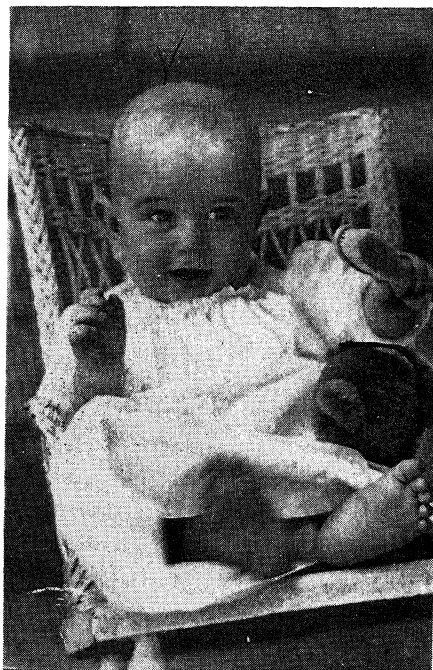
The President and Mrs. Johnson with their two daughters, Lynda Bird and Lucy Baines, Thanksgiving, 1963.

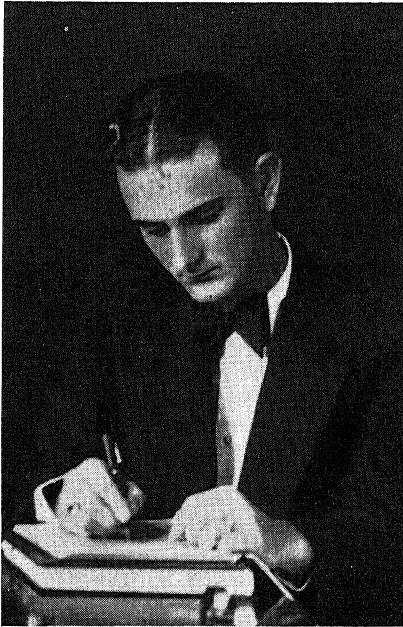


*Neal Douglas*

Lyndon Johnson's birthplace, near Johnson City, Texas.

Lyndon Johnson at six months and at four years. From his mother's photograph album.





Johnson as a college student, and  
a scarred photograph of the fu-  
ture President with some of the  
children he taught at Cotulla,  
Texas.



announcement. He observed that there were three things to be said about the Texas senatorial contest.

“First,” the President went on, “it is up to the people of Texas to elect the man they want as their Senator; second, everybody knows that I cannot enter a primary election; and third, to be truthful, all I can say is Lyndon Johnson is a very old, old friend of mine.”

The President authorized direct quotation of his remarks.

Johnson’s announcement of his candidacy was brief, referring to his experience in Washington and promising continued support of the President and his policies. In Texas, the announcement itself was overshadowed in the newspapers by the story of the “blessing” Roosevelt had bestowed upon the candidate.

This blessing was not unmixed in its effects. A hard core of opposition to the Administration had come to life in Texas. To those comprising this opposition—and there were powerful figures among them—Johnson was anathema by the very fact of Roosevelt’s approval. If FDR was for him, they were against him.

Other strong candidates were in the race for the Senate seat, among them Governor W. Lee O’Daniel, a self-styled “hillbilly” politician of extremely conservative views. Martin Dies, a former congressman and onetime head of the House Un-American Activities Committee, and Gerald C. Mann, the popular and able Attorney General of Texas, also were in the running.

O’Daniel and Dies were vitriolic in their denunciation of the New Deal and of Johnson as a New Deal pet. O’Daniel made a calculated appeal to the spirit of iso-

lutionism that had sprung up among many Texans as the war in Europe cast a growingly ominous shadow over the world.

Johnson set the tone of his own campaign in his opening speech. His theme then, and thereafter, was summed up in the warning, "It is later than we think!" He declared the country was in greater danger than it had been at any time since adoption of the Declaration of Independence. He called for Texans to stand with the President in the dangerous international crisis. He urged that the preparedness program be intensified. He advocated all-out aid to Britain.

Again and again he solemnly told his audiences, "I love peace. I hate war. And if the day ever comes when my vote must be cast to send your boy to war, that day Lyndon Johnson will leave his seat in Congress to go with him."

With respect to domestic issues, Johnson showed himself to be neither an extreme liberal nor a hidebound conservative. At a time when the middle of the road was far from being the most crowded place in the political world, that was where he stood.

In his campaign speeches, he called for full parity prices for farm products; said he favored a nationwide system of old-age pensions, with payments starting to pensioners when they were sixty years old; advocated maternal and child care by the Federal government; declared that the government should prevent both labor and capital from taking advantage of the national need in the present emergency.

As to the charge that he was a "yes man" for the Ad-



ministration, he met it head on. Yes, he admitted, he was a yes man, a particular kind of yes man.

"I am a yes man for everything that is American," he said. "I am a yes man for anything that will aid in the defense of this Republic. I am a yes man to the Commander-in-Chief, as every good soldier should be in time of emergency."

Johnson was the first Texas candidate for political office to make extensive use of the airplane in campaigning. He covered more ground and saw more people than any of his opponents. Adding to the hectic air of his campaign were the enthusiastic, if not always professionally expert, efforts of the thousands of young men and women who remembered how "Lyn" had helped them when he was State Director of the National Youth Administration. These loyal friends constituted the only organization he had.

Johnson's three principal opponents had statewide reputations. He was not at all well known outside the ten counties of his congressional district. He had started far behind. All through the latter part of the furious campaign, public opinion polls showed him gaining strength at a rapid rate. On the eve of the election, the poll figures placed him barely ahead of the field, and this was another election in which a simple plurality of the votes cast meant victory.

Five hours after the voting ended on June 28, 1941, available returns from throughout the state showed Johnson leading O'Daniel by some three thousand votes. Gerald Mann was a fairly strong third and Martin Dies

trailed. Numerous minor candidates received a sprinkling of votes.

On the second day after the voting, Johnson's lead over O'Daniel increased to five thousand votes. At that time 96 percent of the ballots had been counted. Newspapers published detailed biographies of Johnson. Congratulatory messages poured in from all over Texas and from Washington.

But returns were still trickling in from small counties in far sections of the state. Johnson, who had devoted so much of his campaign to warnings that the nation must be prepared to meet the menace of Nazi aggression, received barely half as many votes in the ten leading German counties as O'Daniel polled. Here alone was the margin, and then some, by which the race was won.

Final returns showed O'Daniel was the winner by 1,311 votes out of a total of almost six hundred thousand cast.

Johnson's eager friends urged him to demand a recount. He refused. He was disappointed but not bitter.

"That's the ball game," he said. "Let's play again some other time!"

He flew back to Washington to resume his duties in the House of Representatives.

Five months later the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. An hour after he had voted for the declaration of war, Johnson, for several years a member of the Naval Reserve, asked to be called up for active duty. Within three days he was a lieutenant commander in the Navy, the first member of the House of Representatives to go into uniform.

# V

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Johnson was on active duty in the Navy for only a little more than seven months. But he covered a great deal of territory before July, 1942, when President Roosevelt ordered all members of Congress who had been serving in the military forces back to their work in Washington.

After entering the Navy, the Congressman was placed on duty in San Francisco, attached to the office of the Chief of the United States-New Zealand Navy Command. He immediately started fretting to go overseas.

On a between-trains visit with his brother Sam Houston, who was then working in Denver, Johnson made it clear that he had enough of stateside duty.

"I'm not finding out anything about the war," he complained. "I'm not doing anything. I would be worth more to the country in Congress than I am in this assignment. I'm going to Washington and talk to the Boss. He's got to get something done about me."

He went to Washington and visited the White House. While he was in the city, he spent a little time in his own office in the Old House Office Building. Lady Bird was in charge there, having taken over as her husband's unpaid stand-in to keep the work of the office going. Johnson himself, immediately after going on active duty, had

notified the House Sergeant-at-Arms that he would not accept his congressional salary while he was in the Navy. He drew a lieutenant commander's salary of \$3,000 annually instead of a congressman's pay of \$10,000 a year.

Shortly after returning to San Francisco from his Washington trip, Johnson was on his way to New Zealand. He was busy enough from then on.

By the time he was called back from active duty, he had ranged widely over the Pacific Area of Operations. Seeking information on which to base a report to the President, he had spent several months in Australia with General Douglas MacArthur. He had been on a patrol bomber which, after having a motor knocked out by Japanese fighters, barely managed to get back to its New Guinea home base.

MacArthur had personally bestowed on him the Silver Star for gallantry on this mission. Johnson had volunteered as an observer, stated MacArthur's citation, "to obtain personal knowledge of combat conditions . . . over hostile positions in New Guinea." In the face of enemy fire, "he evidenced marked coolness in spite of the hazard involved" and "his gallant action enabled him to obtain and return with valuable information."

He had survived the crash landing of a Flying Fortress in Australia. "God was with me all the way," he told his mother when he got back home.

A later report by one of the crew members of the crashed plane revealed that Johnson operated in the Navy pretty much as he had in civilian life. The report appears in W. L. White's book, *Queens Die Proudly*, published in

1943. After describing the crash landing of the *Swoose* on an isolated Australian ranch, the crew member continued:

“We got out. Pretty soon Australian ranchers began crawling out of holes in the ground—I don’t know where else they came from—and right away Lieutenant Commander Johnson gets busy. He begins to get acquainted.

“They tell him where we are and some of them go off to get a truck to take us into town where we can telephone, and more keep coming, and Johnson is shaking hands all around, and he comes back and tells us these are real folks—the best damn folks in the world, except maybe the folks in his own Texas.

“Pretty soon he knows all their first names, and they are telling him why there ought to be a high tariff on wool, and there is no question he swung that country for Johnson before he left. He was in his element. I know he sure swung the *Swoose* crew. He can carry that precinct any day.”

The congressman had no trouble with his own precincts in the Tenth District of Texas during his absence, even though it was election year. In the spring of 1942, his name was filed as a candidate for re-election through petitions signed by more than twenty-two thousand qualified voters. In a letter to Lady Bird Johnson telling about the petitions, the organizers of the movement said, “It is the overwhelming sentiment of the voters that Lyndon B. Johnson should again be nominated for Congress.”

Johnson, then in Australia, did not even learn he was a candidate until more than two weeks after the final date for filing his candidacy. Nobody came out against him.

As he resumed his seat in Congress, Johnson was gravely concerned about the war outlook in the Pacific area. Immediately after his return to Washington, he had a long session with Roosevelt and gave the President a frank, down-to-earth appraisal of the situation. He warned in speeches, on the floor of the House and elsewhere, that it was possible for the United States and her allies to lose the war.

In one of his first statements he took up the cudgel for the fighting men he had come to know in New Zealand, Australia and New Guinea, hitting out at the ineffectiveness of some of the high-ranking brass.

"We must get rid of the indecisive, stupid, selfish and incompetent among our generals, admirals and others in high military positions," he declared. "We must make it clear that it is no longer a crime to cut red tape.

"We are going to have to give our men leadership and equipment superior to that of any in the world. We are going to have to move quickly to coordinate dive bombers and domestic politics, tanks and military strategy, ships and the will of the people. Management and manpower are going to have to be closely woven into a smoothly functioning machine devoid of departmental squabbles and petty jealousies."

Representative Johnson was notably a man who had to have a crusade. He had one now that was very close to his heart. He sounded its theme again and again, as in a speech he delivered in the fall of 1942 on the occasion of the official scrapping of an old battleship, the *Oregon*.

"What about the scrapping that needs to be done elsewhere?" he demanded. "What about dollar-a-year men

who make us wonder whether we hadn't better devalue the dollar a little further? What about overstaffed, over-stuffed government that worries along like a centipede, too good in the production of legs and not good enough in the production of arms?

"While we have fighting to do abroad, we have scrapping to do at home. Scrapping of deadwood in thinking, of inefficiency in methods—yes, and of ineffectiveness in men, men who have become entrenched in power, men who love their country and would die for it, but not until their own dangerously outdated notions have caused others to die for it first.

"Today," he said caustically, "there are thirty-three Federal agencies working on the postwar situation—exclusive of Adolf Hitler's men, who are working on the same situation in case we don't win."

He blasted waste: in military manpower, in war plant worker absenteeism, in military procurement.

He was made chairman of a special investigating subcommittee of the Naval Affairs Committee. This group forced the Department of the Navy to adopt more businesslike methods of procurement. It brought about the re-writing of the Navy's contract for petroleum from the Elk Hills Field in California, an action which alone saved the Treasury a small fortune.

His subcommittee labeled as "unjustified and inexcusable" the Navy's practice of staffing desk jobs in Washington with enlisted men who were qualified for sea duty. Johnson brought to light large-scale abuses and laxities in Navy requests for draft deferments for civilian personnel.

He headed a drive in Congress to end absenteeism in war plants after the Naval Affairs Committee had drawn up a documented report showing that absenteeism cost the shipbuilding industry alone more than 16,700,000 man-hours in a single month, a loss of approximately 10 per cent of the industry's entire working force. Johnson introduced a bill requiring all naval contractors and subcontractors to make quarterly reports of unjustified absenteeism to draft boards.

He gave his support to the Smith-Connally Labor Disputes Act, which provided for a thirty-day waiting period before strikes could be called and prohibited jurisdictional strikes, boycotts and sympathy strikes. His backing of this legislation brought down on his head charges from some labor leaders that he had "sold out to the war profiteers."

Johnson had not lost his feeling for labor. He could understand and sympathize with the problems of industry in dealing with government in wartime. He realized that some waste of money and manpower was inevitable in the fast building up of a huge military establishment.

But, along with such understanding, he was determined that the first consideration must be accorded the American men in combat with a deadly enemy, men like the crew of the plane on which he had been an official observer when it was hit by the Japanese in New Guinea.

"When I watched those boys fighting to keep that plane going, something was burned deep into me that I cannot forget," Johnson said during this period. "When those boys and the others like them come back, I don't want to see the bitterness in their faces, the disillusionment in their eyes, which would come from the knowl-



edge that there was something more I might have tried to do to help them—and didn't do it."

As the tide of the war began to turn, the Texan was thinking of what was to come after.

Specifically, he appealed for planning by community leaders and heads of industry everywhere to avoid the economic depression that was being predicted in some quarters for the postwar period. Months before the end of the war in Europe, he showed the trend of his thinking in a letter he sent to newspaper editors in his congressional district. He had some definite proposals to offer.

"I should like to see every school in my congressional district take inventory and plan such repairs, improvements and modernization as they feel essential," he told the editors. "I should like then for the city and county governments to do likewise. I am hopeful that someone will organize private industry and that when the armistice is signed industry will have plans well under way for the necessary conversion.

"A new world is going to open up to us."

He was also deeply concerned, as the end of the war neared, about the threat that the military machine the United States had constructed would be completely dismantled. He had been named by Rayburn as one of the members of a newly created House Committee on Postwar Military Policy. This group was charged with shaping security legislation and policies for the postwar period. Johnson later was appointed as one of the nine House members of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy.

The war ended and there swept over the country an

understandable but hardly realistic demand to "Bring the boys home!" without delay. Military hardware by the thousands of tons was simply junked overseas. Planes, tanks and guns were abandoned. Congressional pleaders for adequate military appropriations, for a system of universal military training, had hard going.

"We must keep strong!" Johnson said. "We must be strong militarily and productively and morally. We must have military strength to fulfill our moral obligations to the world.

"Our supreme duty today is to underwrite the future. We must have a strong police force to protect us from criminals, an Army and Navy strong enough to carry out our pledge to help the United Nations police the world."

The headlong rush of the American people away from war and thoughts of war could not be checked. Even so, Johnson took the lead in fights to stop the premature closing down of the synthetic rubber industry, to check the sale at junkyard prices of war plants worth many millions of dollars, and to bring about the establishment of a seventy-group Air Force in the face of strong opposition.

It was a time of confusion and unrest in Washington and the nation. People were realizing that the end of the war had not automatically solved all their problems.

Americans generally still felt much of the sense of loss that had gripped the country when Roosevelt died. Johnson's own feeling of this was deeply personal.

In an interview with William S. White of *The New York Times* on the day after FDR's death, Johnson had

blurted out that the late President had been a "second daddy" to him. He had then recapitulated for White all that Roosevelt had done for him through the years since he came to Congress. He had reviewed the great humanitarian advances that had been made under Roosevelt's leadership.

Years later, in a brief formal statement in the Senate on January 30, 1956, seventy-fourth anniversary of Roosevelt's birth, Johnson once again restated his tremendous admiration for the New Deal President.

"We are still too close to the period which is inescapably associated with his name to have historical perspective," he said. "But even at this range, it is apparent to every American that he was one of the giants of all times.

"He was a controversial figure—but in the sense that all great men are controversial. He was a leader of courage and conviction, and such men live constantly in the swirling tides of national and international conflict.

"As one who was closely associated with our late President, I will never forget the meaning of his leadership to our country.

"He became President at a time when we were dispirited, discouraged, groping, almost with a sense of hopelessness, for a way out of our difficulties. He left us with a sense of courage and a feeling of buoyancy which will never desert us in our hours of trial.

"The verdict of history is still to be written. But however the book is finally closed, the last line must say that Franklin D. Roosevelt was a man capable of facing the terrible problems of terrible times."

That was his estimate of Roosevelt when time had

eased the emotional shock of the President's death. Feeling as he did, Johnson nevertheless held steadfastly to his conviction that the country was bigger than any man, no matter how great. His attitude was shown in a comment to one of his secretaries a day or two after Roosevelt's death.

The secretary had said, half-weeping, "I feel so lost. Who is there now? Who is there for the country?"

"Why, honey," Johnson said quietly, "there's Truman."

His faith was firm that the country would continue to go forward. His strongest belief had always been in the American system, not in individual men.

In the difficult postwar period Truman was not able to retain for long the bipartisan support in Congress that was given him when he first succeeded to the presidency. The Republicans captured control of both houses of Congress in the 1946 elections. Even before that, many former New Deal Democrats had given aid to the Republicans in blocking various Truman proposals.

Johnson did not join in the sniping at the man in the White House. He was busy, physically and mentally. He was trying to do his job in Congress, but he was also giving sober thought to his own affairs and his personal future.

## VI

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Many of Johnson's friends in Texas were taking it for granted that he would be a candidate for the United States Senate in 1948, the final year of W. Lee O'Daniel's term. Johnson himself was not so sure.

He would be forty years old in that year, with nearly a dozen years of service in the House of Representatives back of him. His position in his district was strong. He felt he probably could continue to be re-elected without a great deal of difficulty. But he wondered if he wanted to spend the years that would be necessary to give him enough seniority to attain a position of real leadership in the many-membered House.

As for the Senate seat, he was by no means certain in his mind that he could get it if he tried. He was never overconfident about such matters. Coke Stevenson, the popular wartime Governor of Texas, had announced his candidacy for the senatorial post. So had a forceful Houston lawyer named George Peddy. It was generally expected that O'Daniel would be a candidate for re-election.

Johnson thought about, and talked with his wife and a few intimate friends about getting out of politics altogether. Perhaps it was time.

He was restless. He and Lady Bird now had two little

girls, one and four years old, and he wanted to be able to spend more time with his family. Also, he wanted to make money, which he knew he would never be able to do in politics.

A few years before, Lady Bird had bought a radio station in Austin and turned it into a paying proposition. Johnson felt that, with the inhibitions of his official position removed to give him a free hand in promoting the station, he could help in its continued development. He was thinking about a television station, too. He wanted to get in on the material possibilities of the new world he had predicted was going to open up once the war was finished.

In May, 1948, he went down to Austin prepared to make an announcement that he would not offer himself as a candidate for the Senate.

"I got down there," he related later, "and called in a few of my close friends and told them what I planned to do. There wasn't much talk about it, no display of disappointment on their part. They seemed to accept my decision.

"Then about four o'clock in the afternoon a group of young men came to see me. I had known some of them since the NYA days. They had helped me in my 1941 race for the Senate. Some of them were making good records of their own in public service.

"They told me I had been the cause of their taking an interest in public affairs and working for better government. They said that gave me a certain obligation toward them. They asked me, quietly and without any argument, to change my mind about the Senate race."

It was hard for him to reconsider his decision. His busy mind was already planning ahead for the private life to which he proposed to return. But he did reconsider and announced his candidacy for the Senate that evening at a hastily called press conference.

This was not to be a special election, such as the one that had sent Johnson to Congress in 1937 and such as the one he had come so close to winning when he ran for the Senate in 1941. This time he was a candidate in the Democratic primary in July. If no candidate obtained a majority of all votes cast, there would be a runoff one month later between the two top men. The winner of the second primary would become the official Democratic nominee and could be expected to have only token opposition from the Republican Party in the general election.

If Johnson lost, he would not be able to return to his House seat as he had done in 1941. This time, he was either going to be elected Senator or be out of public office.

O'Daniel surprised most observers by declining to stand for re-election. But Coke Stevenson was a formidable opponent. A homespun conservative rancher and longtime politician, he had a good record as Governor, an office from which he had retired at the beginning of 1947. Before that he had been Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives. He had no political machine as such, but he could call on many powerful friends for help. His standing was high with the everyday citizens of Texas. A statewide poll of public opinion near the end of his tenure of Governor showed that 71 per cent of the people approved of his administration.

Johnson had no readymade organization, but he had the raw material for one. Thousands of former NYAers in every part of the state were ready to turn out in an effort to do what they had failed to accomplish in 1941. Many important Texans were indebted to Johnson for help he had given them in dealing with Washington officials during the war years. He had comparative youth. He was thirty-nine. Stevenson was sixty.

In his opening speech in Austin on May 22, Johnson based his campaign on "three bold signposts on the road we should travel toward a better tomorrow." These signposts he listed as Peace—Preparedness—Progress.

He called for the establishment of a governmental climate that would favor the maintenance of a strong industrial system. He declared the United States must have the world's most powerful Air Force and an Army and a Navy adequate to any task. He said continued scientific development, including research into peacetime application of atomic energy, should be fostered by the Federal government.

On the subject of what the United States could do to help insure a peaceful world, Johnson suggested :

"We can strengthen the United Nations.

"We can keep open the free channels of trade.

"We can stand up to the warmakers and say, 'This far and no farther'—as we did in Greece and Turkey.

"We can help free men with the Marshall Plan.

"We can tell the world about America and American aims."

There was nothing wrong with this program, of course, but experienced political observers among John-



son's friends warned him that it was not calculated to set the voters on fire. He must, they agreed, find an issue that would excite people.

The campaign was off to a rather dull start. Stevenson was traveling around over Texas by automobile, stopping in small towns to shake hands with people on the streets and making speeches over a radio network. The ex-Governor ignored his opponents, contenting himself with calling attention to his own public record and to the need for economy in the Federal government. Peddy, the Houston lawyer, also was delivering competent but uninspired attacks on Federal extravagance and bureaucracy.

Shortly after his opening campaign talk, Johnson captured the news headlines momentarily by coming down with a kidney infection and being dramatically flown by his friend, the famed Jacqueline Cochran, to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, for treatment. He was there for two weeks.

He came back to Texas with an inspiration. A week later he was up in the air in a helicopter equipped with a public address system and dubbed by him the "Johnson City Windmill."

In the weeks that followed he leapfrogged all over the big state, coming down in towns and cities to make brief addresses to the people attracted by the helicopter and hovering over crossroad settlements and remote hamlets to blast down the information that he was Lyndon Johnson of Johnson City and was a candidate for the United States Senate.

At that time most people had never seen a helicopter.

In many smaller settlements of Texas, most people had never seen a candidate for the Senate either. The opportunity to see both at once was not one to be missed.

It was a new political gimmick and was highly successful in getting listeners for the candidate's remarks about his program of peace, preparedness and progress. On his first day in the helicopter Johnson estimated that he saw and was seen by six thousand people. The flying windmill enabled him to present his candidacy to as many as fifty or sixty thousand individuals in a single week.

His campaign was off the ground, so to speak, but he still had not found the issue he wanted. It was handed to him not on a silver platter but on a workingman's spade near the end of June, when over a month still remained before the first primary.

State officials of the American Federation of Labor, holding a political caucus in Fort Worth, endorsed the candidacy of Coke Stevenson for Senator. The endorsement broke a precedent of fifty years' standing.

The former Governor had never been known especially as "a friend of labor." Surprise was expressed among political observers that the conservative Stevenson should get the nod from organized labor over Lyndon Johnson, considered by many Texans to symbolize what they thought of as the dangerously radical theories of the old New Deal and the new Fair Deal.

But Johnson had voted in Congress for the Taft-Hartley Act. This law, passed over Truman's veto in 1947 with the aid of most of the Democrats from the South, was designed to eliminate the abuses of powers granted organized labor under the Wagner Act. The

Taft-Hartley Act set up certain protections for employers as well as employees, placed limits on the closed shop, regulated and restricted political contributions from union funds, and increased the burden of union responsibility in contracts between labor and management.

The general public regarded the act as a necessary curb on the tremendous power and influence the labor unions had come to possess. The law was popular in Texas. But leaders of organized labor bitterly stigmatized Taft-Hartley as reactionary legislation. They had vowed vengeance on those in Congress who had voted for the measure.

Johnson, who may have hoped that his whole record as a congressman would be considered by the labor leaders and would influence them at least to keep hands off the senatorial contest, leaped into the press with the charge that Coke Stevenson had made "a secret deal" with the unions. He appealed to Texans to write Stevenson and ask him how he stood on the Taft-Hartley Act.

"If my opponent has promised to repeal the law, the people have a right to know," Johnson declared. "If he has not made such a promise, the people have a right to know.

"Also," he added, "I think the laboring men should ask their leaders to tell them openly why they wanted the unions to break a fifty-year precedent and endorse a faltering candidate who did not have the courage to sign or veto the state's vicious anti-labor law when he was Governor."

Johnson had his issue. He never let it go.

From that time not a day passed without his issuing a

demand for Stevenson to state his stand on Taft-Hartley. Perhaps there were many people in Texas who had no knowledge at all of the law's provisions. Probably there were many who did not care. Nevertheless, Johnson's persistent, dramatic, accusatory cry—"How does he stand on Taft-Hartley? Why won't he tell you?"—had its effect.

It was not enough, however, to give Johnson the nomination in the first primary or even to place him in the lead. He received 405,617 votes to Stevenson's 477,077. Nine other candidates, with George Peddy the only serious contender, received a combined total of 320,000 votes. There had to be a runoff.

A week after the election Johnson was back in full cry. He abandoned his helicopter, announcing that it was too slow for him, and flew from one city to another to go after votes. Stevenson had led in almost all the metropolitan counties, and Johnson saw his only hope lay in whittling down his opponent's lead in those areas.

He had his campaign organization working around the clock. Lights in the big house in Austin which served as campaign headquarters burned all night.

Johnson attacked his opponent's record as Governor and charged him with being isolationist in his approach to foreign policy. He pointed out that his own record in the House of Representatives was one of steadily increasing responsibility and that his experience fitted him for service in the Senate. He reviewed his votes in Congress to show that he was not an extremist of either the left or the right.

Johnson lost so much weight that the flesh of his face

seemed to have melted away. Chronic sleeplessness had driven his eyes far back into his head. Sometimes his voice was a croak. He never stopped going.

A Stevenson adherent, reviewing the campaign long afterward, said, "Our big trouble was that we had a candidate who really preferred to say nothing and an opponent who was determined to say something and keep saying it. And what he said hurt."

It was one of the toughest political campaigns Texans had ever witnessed. It had a melodramatic finish.

The runoff brought Johnson 494,191 votes and Stevenson 494,104 votes, a difference of eighty-seven votes in Johnson's favor.

Stevenson announced that he would not accept the result as valid. Suits and countersuits were filed in county, state and Federal courts simultaneously. Johnson eventually won all along the line.

He had to be officially certified as the Senate nominee by the Democratic State Executive Committee. The committee was as closely divided as the voting populace. But Johnson was certified by a vote of twenty-nine to twenty-eight.

Texas Republicans came to life and announced that the Democratic nominee would receive more than token opposition this time. Jack Porter, a Houston oilman who had left the Democratic Party in the early forties, carried the Republican banner in the general election. Porter was a vigorous campaigner. He later became Republican National Committeeman from Texas during the Eisenhower Administration. And he fought hard. He enlisted the aid

of Coke Stevenson, who took to the radio to urge his followers to support Porter.

Johnson, who did no more campaigning, won by a two-to-one vote in the general election.

He was headed for the Senate at last, forty years and a few months after his grandfather had predicted it would happen.

## VII

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When Lyndon Johnson took his seat as United States Senator from Texas in January, 1949, he had been considerably sobered by the close, bitter campaign and its Hairbreadth Harry finish. He was hurt by jeering references to him as "Landslide Lyndon." But he was realistic and, as always, he was looking to the future.

"Almost exactly one-half the people who voted in the Democratic primary didn't want me for their Senator," Johnson told friends. "My big job is to get them to change their minds about me."

The best way to do that, he reasoned, was to work hard in the Senate for all the people of Texas, those who had opposed him as well as those who had supported him. He needed converts.

He deliberately set out to do the kind of things for the state that he had done for the Tenth Congressional District. He assembled around him a considerably enlarged staff, the core of which were a few persons who had been with him through most of his career as a public official. He interested himself in every problem affecting Texas. He threw his tremendous energy into making his office a service office for all Texans. This was something he knew how to do.

In the Senate, he adhered to the tradition that freshmen members should be more seen than heard. He received the committee appointment he wanted and for which his experience in the House best fitted him, being named to the Senate Armed Services Committee. He studied the history of the Senate and its methods of operation. He studied the characteristics of individual Senators.

Several old friends with whom he had served in the House of Representatives were now in the Senate. He made new friends—men like Richard B. Russell of Georgia, Edwin C. Johnson of Colorado, Ernest McFarland of Arizona and Virgil Chapman of Kentucky. The scholarly and able Russell, who had become chairman of the Armed Services Committee, was particularly impressed with the energy and alertness of his new committee member, and the two men became fast friends.

Very early in his Senate term, Johnson began building up a team of expert advisers. He maintained his close relationship with Sam Rayburn, who was again Speaker of the House following the Democratic victory of 1948. The new Senator from Texas constantly soaked up knowledge from such sage and experienced counselors as Rayburn, Russell, his old friend Chief Justice Fred Vinson, Stuart Symington, Justice Tom Clark, and many others.

During working hours and social hours, Johnson was hard and heavy at his self-imposed task of learning to become the most effective Senator he could possibly be. He and Lady Bird never went in very extensively for the social life of Washington. Even when Johnson did attend parties, he was usually to be found off in one corner of the room talking politics.



“All my life,” Johnson has said, “when I have been faced with a particular problem, I have tried to find the man who knew more than anybody else about that problem. Then I have asked for his advice. After I get the best advice available to me, I try to follow it.”

During his first year in the Senate, he became increasingly concerned about the place of the United States in a world where victory in the fighting war had been succeeded by a dangerous cold war between onetime allies. Adequate preparedness was always a cause close to Johnson’s heart. He now set out to buck the trend toward letting the American defense system go to pot.

The United States’ initial monopoly of atomic weapons had not lasted long. Communism had spread over once-free European countries and had sealed the back entrance to Soviet Russia through the conquest of China. It seemed to Johnson, looking with alarm at these facts, that Communism had achieved most of its major goals everywhere except in the United States and the nations allied with the United States by means of the Atlantic Pact.

In Johnson’s view, the American military establishment had been whittled down to a dangerously low point. After the President and the Budget Director decided in 1948 to impound funds that had been appropriated to keep aircraft production plants tooled up and productive, Congress refused to force the issue.

The fight for a seventy-group Air Force had been lost. The Air Force would have been torn to shreds except for the persistent efforts of Johnson and Stuart Symington, Assistant Secretary of War for Air before the military services were merged and first Secretary of the Air Force

in the new Department of Defense. The two men, fighting hard, did all they could. Neither of them considered it was enough.

Economy in defense was the watchword in the Executive Department. From his work on the Armed Services Committee, Johnson knew that only a small percentage of even the reduced defense budget was earmarked for the vital purpose of research and development of new weapons. He knew, too, that the services were racked by intramural jealousies in spite of the Unification Act that had brought them all together under the Department of Defense. Successive reductions in strength had been made not only in the Air Force but also in the Army and Navy.

The situation seemed most alarming to Johnson, considering the troubled state of the world. He called for a searching review of American foreign and military policy.

On February 28, 1950, he made one of his most important speeches. It was delivered before a meeting of the American Association of School Administrators in Atlantic City. Its subject was "Our National Security."

In this address, after presenting some of the facts about the cold war which was constantly threatening to become hot, Johnson accorded consideration to the charge that there was "fat" in the nation's defense system and to the assurance of the economizers that they wanted only "to cut fat, not muscle."

"There is fat in the defense establishment—physical fat and mental fat," Johnson conceded.

"I am most anxious that we fry out the mental fat," he declared, and continued:

"I believe the time is near when the proper authorities

must determine the facts concerning the strength of our military establishment. This should be done not in a spirit of bias or a spirit of petty revenge, but in the hope of making full use of this nation's scientific and technological resources.

"In addition, I think we should look into our stock-piling program so that we can avoid the great hazard of being caught short in essential strategic materials.

"Also, we must look thoroughly into the condition of our military housing and other factors relating to personnel so that the morale of our forces will not be lowered and their efficiency reduced at this period when the utmost is demanded from all of us, individually and as a team.

"We have the advantage of a long history of free public education, which has given us the world's greatest reservoir of enlightened manpower. We have the further advantage of freedom, which permits the full use of the minds and learning of our citizens.

"That is our great source of strength. We must put that strength to use in the military as in all other areas of our government.

"For five years, we Americans perhaps have to some extent isolated ourselves behind the security of an atomic monopoly. We were tired from the exertion of war, weary of crisis. We concentrated our national energy and our national talent on our own comfort more than on our security.

"This is true in the formulation of our foreign policy, true in the formulation of our domestic policies, and true of the broad conduct of our military establishment.

"That isolation is ended.

“We can no longer indulge laziness or sluggishness.

“We must challenge ourselves—and in that challenge we shall find the salvation of the world.

“The facts are grim, but we must face them. By facing facts squarely we can and will find the answers to our problem of survival.

“This is not the darkest hour in our national history. If the challenge of the moment stirs our imagination and our capacity for invention, we may see the brightest hour of civilization.

“There is hope for us and for the world—so long as we keep hope alive.”

This address attracted national attention and helped pave the way for the position Johnson was rapidly to assume as the conscience of the Senate on matters pertaining to the national security.

Four months after he spoke, the Communists of North Korea marched southward and President Truman ordered the armed forces of the United States to join the United Nations in the defense of South Korea.

Johnson hailed the President’s action as necessary and praiseworthy. It was an action, he said, that “gives a new and noble meaning to freedom, gives purpose to our national resolve and determination, and affirms convincingly America’s capacity for world leadership.”

In the days that followed, his compelling voice was heard increasingly often in the Senate chamber.

He pointed out that the forces of the United Nations were seriously outnumbered.

He declared that American military equipment available for the task in Korea “is plainly inadequate in quantity and it is not the right kind.”

He called attention to the two-edged fact that the problem of supply in South Korea was overwhelming and that prospects for correcting the situation were bleak.

"We must not," he said in a Senate speech, "act too slowly, too cautiously, with too much consideration for the comfort of those who remain behind.

"We can no longer sit by and see our strength decimated by delay—defeat—retreat."

He urged three immediate steps: development of a long-range global plan of strategy; immediate full mobilization of available manpower; prompt mobilization of the American economy.

He also called for an end to blaming the Administration for the conflict in Korea. "The Communists, not President Truman, were responsible for the invasion of South Korea," he reminded. "The quicker we direct our hostility to the enemy instead of our leaders, the quicker we will get the job done."

In the latter part of July, 1950, Johnson introduced a resolution, which the Senate promptly passed, establishing the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee. He was designated chairman of the subcommittee and was off on a series of investigations that strengthened the military establishment in a crucial period and at the same time saved American taxpayers several billion dollars.

The subcommittee was in effect a successor to the National Defense Investigating Committee headed by Harry Truman in 1941 when he was a member of the Senate. That committee had been a powerful watchdog during the war and actually was Truman's springboard to the vice presidency and eventually to the presidency.

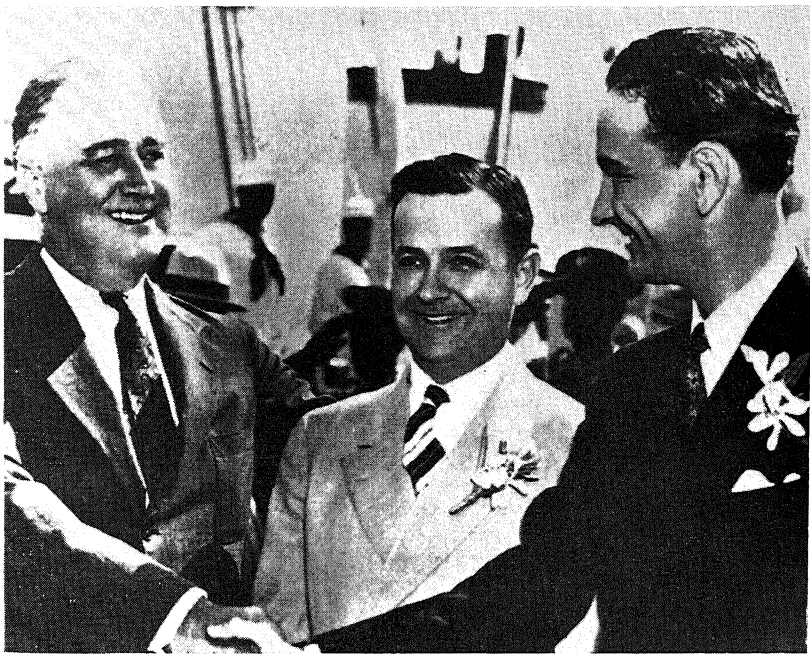
Members of the new subcommittee called on Truman at the White House to enlist his support of the effort they planned and to get the benefit of his experience with a similar panel. Truman welcomed them cordially and told them he would see that they had the complete cooperation of the Executive Department. He called Johnson back for a private word at the end of the conference.

“The most important single thing to remember,” he advised, “is to make sure that you have the support of the minority members of your committee. To be effective, this committee must work in a completely bipartisan, or nonpartisan, atmosphere.”

Members of the subcommittee, along with Johnson, were three other Democrats, Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, Virgil Chapman of Kentucky and Lester Hunt of Wyoming; and three Republicans, Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, Wayne Morse of Oregon and Leverett Saltonstall of Massachusetts.

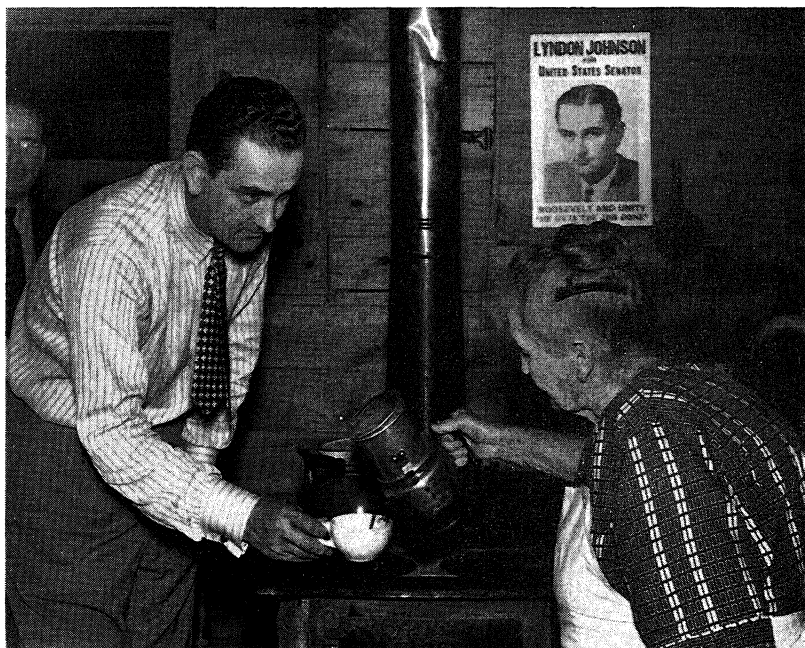
It would have been difficult, even in such a haven of individualists as the United States Senate, to find a more diverse group. Yet this committee, made up of seven strong personalities with widely varying political philosophies, issued forty-four reports (many of them on highly controversial subjects) during the first two years of its existence and every report was unanimous. Lyndon Johnson had learned a great deal about the art of getting along with people and bringing them to agreement.

At the organization meeting of the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, the chairman set four guideposts of conduct.



*Jack Miller*

Franklin D. Roosevelt and Johnson were brought together in 1937 by Texas Governor James V. Allred.

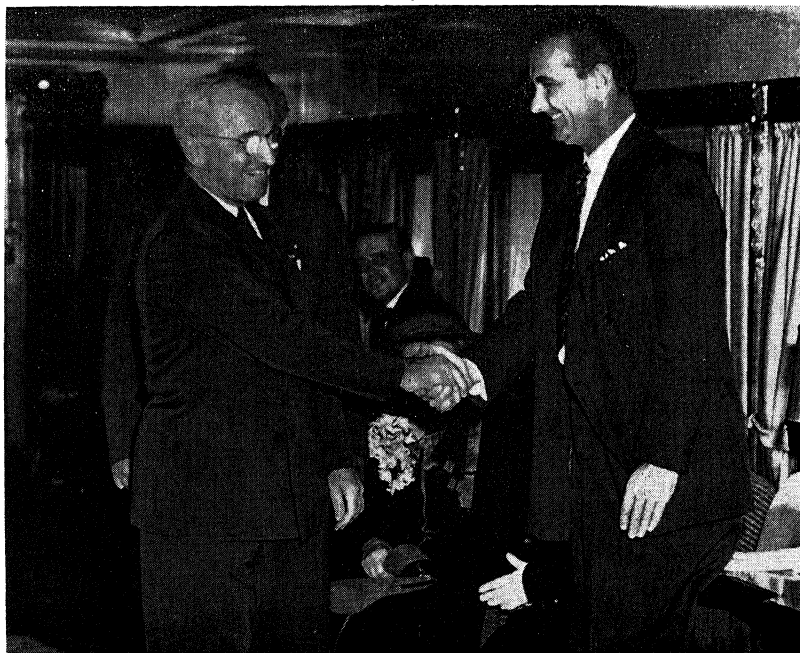


Coffee cup campaigning during Johnson's first and unsuccessful try for the U.S. Senate in 1941.



Lieutenant Commander Johnson at General MacArthur's wartime headquarters in Australia.

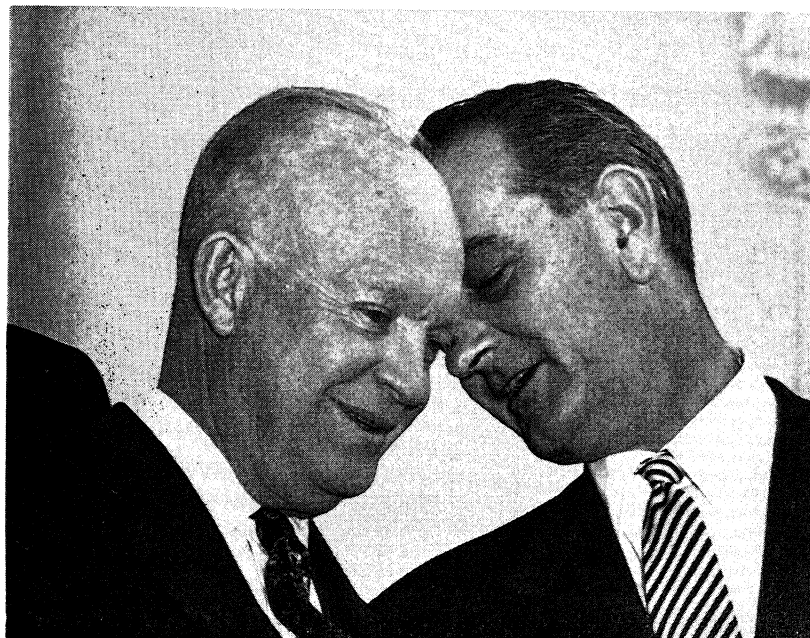
With Harry Truman during the presidential campaign of 1948.



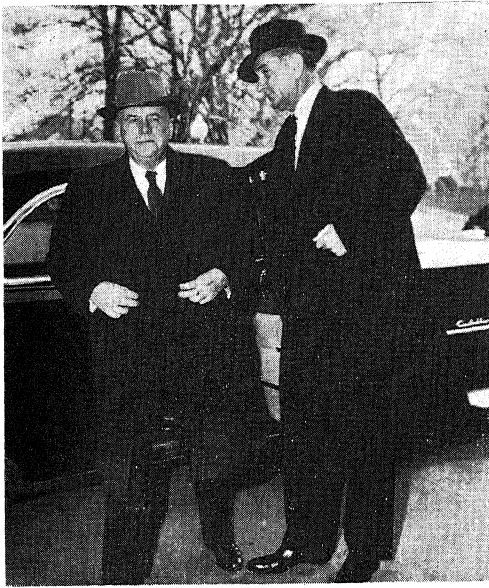




Grace Tully, personal secretary to FDR for many years, was executive assistant to Majority Leader Johnson.



Heart-to-heart talk with President Eisenhower in the fall of 1955.



Speaker Sam Rayburn and the Senate Majority Leader on the way to the White House in March, 1956.

*Wide World*



Lyndon Johnson and the "Heart Baby" of 1958.

The members pledged themselves against mere headline hunting. They promised to develop the substantial, not to exploit the sensational.

They pledged themselves to nonpartisanship, with politics "left outside the door to the committee room."

They pledged themselves to avoid second-guessing battlefront strategy. They conceived of their job as being not one of telling the generals and admirals how to fight the battles but rather one of making sure that the military leaders and the men fighting under them had what they needed to win those battles.

They promised to be frank, impartial and straightforward in all their inquiries and recommendations.

These were high standards. They were adhered to rigidly. The basic rule Johnson laid down for the committee was to be "blunt but not unfair, zealous but not persecuting, helpful but not uncompromising."

"Our big job," he told his fellow-committeemen, "is to get the defense effort away from hardening of the arteries of imagination and ingenuity."

The new panel started off right by obtaining the services of an outstanding attorney as general counsel. He was Donald C. Cook, who had served as chief counsel to the old House Naval Affairs Committee's defense probe which Johnson had headed. When he was called on to work with the new committee, he was vice-chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Later he was elevated to the chairmanship of the SEC. At Johnson's request, he worked without pay and on a part-time basis—nights and week-ends, mostly—as the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee's general counsel and chief braintruster.

His brilliant performance was a factor of tremendous importance in the success of the subcommittee.

Johnson and Cook assembled a staff of investigators and got at the job before them.

That job consisted of two major undertakings. One was to conduct an overall manpower study, seeking to determine the nation's capabilities for raising a large armed force without crippling agriculture and industry. The other was to see that the industrial mobilization program authorized by Congress was carried out expeditiously and without waste in order to provide guns, tanks and other equipment for men called into service.

The panel's first investigation dealt with the nation's synthetic rubber production program. The development of the synthetic rubber industry had been vastly important during the war. But after the war ended the industry had deteriorated badly, with some of the rubber plants being sold to surplus dealers and dismantled. The country was coming dangerously close to rubber shortages and the cost of natural rubber was rising constantly.

The report of the subcommittee's findings blasted the Munitions Board for slowing down instead of speeding up rubber stockpiling. That report also contained some barbed observations on the failure of the agency to cooperate with subcommittee investigators. The Munitions Board had let three weeks pass without even bothering to reply to urgent inquiries from the subcommittee.

"Either the Munitions Board has a program or it has not," the report stated. "If it has a program, it could readily be described. If it has no program, it should be candidly admitted.

“In any event, if the diligence with which the Munitions Board addressed itself to our inquiry is any measure of the manner in which it attends to its other duties, its competence would seem to leave something to be desired.”

This forthright initial report of the new subcommittee had three immediate results.

Munitions Board Chairman Hubert B. Howard abruptly resigned.

The National Securities Resources Board accepted the subcommittee's recommendations that sales of rubber plants as surplus property be stopped at once, that all available rubber plants be put back into full production as rapidly as possible, and that notice be served on the world that the United States would not buy natural rubber at exorbitant prices but instead would increase domestic facilities for synthetic rubber production. The recommendations were formulated into a program adopted by the Executive Branch. Resultant savings to American taxpayers were estimated at more than a billion dollars.

The third effect of the report was to place the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee and its chairman in front-page newspaper stories all over the country.

The United Nations forces, composed largely of Americans, were being beaten in Korea. The American people at home were disturbed and angry about the course the fighting had taken. Here came a member of the United States Senate who agreed with them, who voiced their own feelings about Federal bureaucracy that hindered the fighting men instead of helping them, who proved the existence of conditions which they had suspected.

The people understood and applauded language like

this, used in one of Johnson's early reports: "Many officials who have carved an empire for themselves out of the Washington jungle are reluctant to surrender any part of their domain. The eventual loser is the taxpayer. He finds himself paying two men to do the work of one or, what is even worse, paying two men to do jobs that should not exist at all."

Johnson had announced that the subcommittee would not seek headlines. It had no need to seek them. The information its investigators uncovered and the sharp, relentless quizzing of witnesses by the chairman in public hearings was the natural stuff of which newspaper headlines are made.

But the headlines were only the outward evidence of the group's activities. More important was the fact that its work got the right kind of results.

A subcommittee report disclosed that price gouging by tin producers was skyrocketing the cost of the defense program. Corrective action saved an estimated half a billion dollars in public funds.

Another investigation uncovered waste of critical manpower due to Air Force "hoarding" of available men. After the report came out, the Air Force took steps to induct its men in an orderly manner to prevent a repetition of the excessive crowding at various fields.

In the Army, Johnson found staff sergeants issuing golf equipment, expert pilots acting as post exchange officers, trained tank mechanics recalled to Reserve units that had no tanks. As a result of the subcommittee's pinpointing of such waste in a number of installations, the Army Chief of Staff decided he could squeeze out two

additional combat divisions without increasing the size of the Army.

Two reports discussed the substandard housing available to dependents of military personnel, forced by economic circumstances to live in packing crates, mule sheds, tool sheds, and in one case a "house" built of whiskey bottles and old tin cans. The military launched a program to make more adequate housing available.

Another report disclosed illegal gambling activities near a large Air Force base, with servicemen being victimized on a wholesale basis by slot machines and other devices. Local authorities clamped down on these activities after the report was made public.

Down in Johnson's own state of Texas, committee investigators found a farmer had bought \$1,200,000 worth of surplus airplane parts for \$6.89 and then sold them back to the government for \$63,000. No illegal action was involved. It was, in Johnson's words, simply an "astounding case of shortsightedness." It bore out his charge that, even after the development of the Korean crisis, Defense Department officials approved the sale as "surplus" of everything from aircraft engines to war industry plants. The policy was changed after the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee started bearing down.

Sometimes the high brass at the Pentagon complained about the subcommittee's activities. On the whole, however, Johnson found the military services willing to accept recommendations based on findings of fact and to correct deficiencies. The subcommittee earned respect by its thoroughness, its fairness, its strict adherence to the purpose for which it was established.

Often a mere hint of action would cause a bad situation to be corrected. For example, the Air Force once suddenly canceled a \$1,650,000 order for white dress gloves for officers because there had been a report that Johnson was thinking about—just thinking about—making an investigation of gloves in the Air Force.

From a financial point of view, the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee was an excellent investment for the government. Savings of tax funds as a result of its work were variously estimated at from three to more than five billion dollars. The total cost in committee payroll and operating expenses was less than \$275,000 for the period from July, 1950, to February, 1953.

It was a record which Johnson viewed with understandable satisfaction.

During this time, as chairman of the subcommittee and on the floor of the Senate, Johnson continued to wage his unremitting battle against what he termed “a siesta psychology” with respect to the world situation in general and the Korean conflict in particular.

In a speech in December, 1950, after the Chinese had entered the battle on the Korean peninsula, he declared that in the six costly months since the beginning of hostilities the government’s planning and action had continued to be on a basis of “day to day and hour to hour.”

“We have committed ourselves only to a policy of not committing ourselves,” he charged. “What is the result?”

“For the common defense we have thrown up a chickenwire fence, not a wall of armed might.”

He got to his feet behind his desk in the Senate to pose a solemn question: “Is this our last hour?”



“Is this the hour of our nation’s twilight, the last fading hour of light before an endless night shall envelop us and all the western world?”

“That is a question which we still have in our power to answer.

“If we delay longer, we can expect nothing but darkness and defeat and desolation.

“If we answer the challenge with courage and confidence and with the ability of which we are capable, we can, I am sure, triumph over our foes.”

During these blackest hours of the war in Korea—the “police action,” as it was officially designated—Johnson warned firmly that compromise and timidity, vacillation and expediency could result only in defeat, dishonor and destruction.

As a United States Senator, he called insistently for a national will to win.

As chairman of the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, he helped clear the way to victory by fighting against waste and for full utilization of the nation’s manpower and industrial might.

During these years Lyndon Johnson did work of tremendous value to the United States, and became known to many thousands of Americans who had never before heard of him. And, of even greater importance, he gained the lasting respect and friendship of some of the most powerful members of the Senate.

# VIII

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During the time he was earning for himself a position of growing prominence on the national scene, the Senator from Texas also was doing a highly specialized kind of job in the Senate for the Democratic Party. At the beginning of the 1951 session of Congress, Democratic members of the Senate unanimously chose Johnson as Majority Whip.

The position of Party Whip in the Senate is an important and taxing one. The Whip's principal responsibility is to see to it that members of his party are on hand to vote when the time comes for voting. Senators have many duties in addition to those they perform in the Senate chamber. Often, as the moment approaches for voting on a legislative measure, the Senators have to be located and notified that their presence is required on the floor.

The Party Whip needs to be a young, energetic, well-liked man. The youth and energy are necessary because of the physical demands of the job. The Whip must remain alertly at his post, no matter how far into the night the Senate may stay in session, and must be prepared to do a large amount of simple legwork. The popularity is a prime requisite because Senators may not at times relish being told they must drop whatever they are doing and go to the Senate floor for a vote.

Johnson met all three qualifications. He turned in an outstanding performance as Democratic Whip at a time when the Truman Administration was losing support among party members in Congress as well as among the American people generally.

One thing the job did for him was to put him in daily close contact with the most important men on the Democratic side of the Senate chamber.

In addition to getting members to the floor for votes, the Whip's duties include staying constantly in touch with the Party Leader and acting in his place when necessary. At the time Johnson was named Whip, Ernest McFarland of Arizona was elected Majority Leader. McFarland was a man with whom the Texan could work smoothly and effectively. Both men occupied a middle-of-the-road position on party issues. Both were moderates. Both had persuasive personalities.

In assuming his new post, Johnson automatically became a member of the Democratic Steering Committee and the Democratic Policy Committee of the Senate. The function of the Steering Committee is to make party assignments to standing Senate committees. The Policy Committee, as its name indicates, sets party policy on important issues arising in the Senate.

In addition to McFarland and Johnson, the Policy Committee's membership consisted of Russell, Chapman, Theodore Francis Green of Rhode Island, Lister Hill of Alabama, Brien McMahon of Connecticut, Joseph C. O'Mahoney of Wyoming, and Robert Kerr of Oklahoma. All these men except Kerr, who also had entered the Senate in 1949, were Johnson's seniors in service as well as in years. There was much he could learn from them.

Felton "Skeeter" Johnston, later Secretary of the Senate and at that time Secretary to the Senate Majority, expressed the greatest admiration for the way in which Johnson conducted himself as Whip.

Johnston, whose experience as a Senate employee dated from 1929, recalled that the Texan was generally looked upon by his fellow-Senators as a "comer."

"That's a good thing, of course, but it can be dangerous," Johnston said, speaking out of his wealth of knowledge regarding the Senate as an institution. "After all, Senator Johnson was just beginning his third year of Senate service when he was named Whip. That was moving along pretty fast. Some of the men he worked with every day had been in the Senate five or six times as long as he had.

"He felt his way very carefully. He didn't try to push himself forward too much. He deferred, as was completely proper, to the Majority Leader. But he was always there when he was needed. And even then he had a genius for getting along with people and causing them to get along with one another."

This was a period of growth and development for Johnson. Although the two houses of Congress are constitutionally equal, there is a tremendous difference between being one of 435 Representatives and one of ninety-six Senators, the membership of the Senate at that time. And Johnson was not merely another of the ninety-six. He was close to the top party leadership in the Senate.

Ever since he came to the House of Representatives he had been something of a crusader. Now, as a Senator, he still fought hard and determinedly for causes in which he

believed. But he was changing. He was developing a potent ability to persuade men who differed violently to sit down with him in an effort to lessen somewhat the extent of their disagreements.

This training Johnson received during his service as Majority Whip was invaluable to him. He gained much; but he also contributed much and the worth of his contribution did not go unrecognized.

"The Senate will not soon know, and the country may never know," said Vice President Alben W. Barkley at the end of the 1952 session of Congress, "how the Senator has worked behind the scenes in ironing out differences between the Senate and the House and among Senators."

Barkley, who before becoming Vice President had himself served as Senate Democratic Leader for a dozen years, expressed the considered opinion that Johnson had attained "a reputation and a standing never exceeded in the same length of time by any other member of the United States Senate."

The Vice President was joined in his praise of the Majority Whip by Herbert H. Lehman of New York, a liberal whose views were often far removed from those held by Johnson. Lehman warmly congratulated Johnson as well as McFarland on "the spirit of unity" which had been achieved under their leadership.

Clearly, Johnson's star was rising in the Democratic Party. But the fortunes of the party itself were distinctly on the downgrade.

The Democratic Party had a heavy load to carry as it prepared for the general election of 1952. It was the year when appeals were made to clean up "that mess in Wash-

ington," the year of "the great crusade" on behalf of General Dwight D. Eisenhower. There was never a day during the campaign when the Democrats were not on the defensive.

Johnson supported Dick Russell in the Georgian's bid for the Democratic nomination for President. But after Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois was nominated, Johnson promptly announced that he would support the nominee.

Considering the times, considering the issues and personalities involved, considering above all that Texas was the state represented by Johnson in the Senate, it was a courageous decision.

In spite of Texas' position as traditionally an "in the bag" Democratic state, most of the state's leading newspapers had endorsed Eisenhower. Allan Shivers, who had been nominated by a heavy majority in the Democratic primary for another term as Governor, was urging Eisenhower's election. So was Price Daniel, the Democratic nominee for the Senate seat being vacated by Tom Connally. Many of Johnson's leading personal supporters favored Eisenhower.

Heavy pressure was put on Johnson by some of his longtime friends. They urged him, since he would not support the Republican candidate, at least not to campaign actively for the Democratic candidate. If he felt he must vote for Stevenson, they counseled, let him do so without unduly advertising the fact.

Political observers whose judgment Johnson trusted assured him that the state probably would go for Eisenhower. He himself would be up for re-election in a couple

of years, they reminded him. Wisdom dictated that he spend his time building up his own political fences instead of deliberately placing himself on what was almost certain to be the losing side in the presidential contest.

Johnson listened to his friends, as always, but he was not swayed by them.

"I just can't do what you are asking," he told one highly influential man, who had given him valuable support in both his unsuccessful and his successful races for the Senate. "It wouldn't be right, and I don't even think it would be smart. I believe the Democratic Party is best for Texas and the South and the nation. It's a firm conviction with me and I can't go against my convictions."

He lost that man as a supporter and he lost his personal friendship as well. He regretted the double loss and was deeply pained when word reached him that the man was castigating him as an ingrate. But there was no doubt in his mind about the course he should follow.

The regularly constituted State Democratic organization was backing Eisenhower. Rayburn set up a special Stevenson-Sparkman campaign committee with headquarters in Dallas. Many prominent Democratic officeholders conspicuously stayed away from the Speaker and his committee. Johnson was not among them. He and Rayburn worked together perhaps more closely than ever before during that fall of 1952.

"Lyndon did everything—everything—I asked him to do during the campaign," Rayburn said afterward.

Johnson made a number of barnstorming speeches on behalf of the Democratic ticket. In one three-day period he delivered more than twenty addresses.

When Adlai Stevenson made a tour of Texas, Johnson introduced him on his first appearance and then accompanied the Democratic candidate throughout the state on a special campaign train.

He gave the introductory address when Vice President Barkley came to Austin to urge Texans to stay in the Democratic ranks.

Johnson also broadcast over a statewide radio network a carefully reasoned explanation of why he was supporting, as he proclaimed, "the entire Democratic ticket."

He said there were two major issues in the campaign: "prosperity for our people" and "peace for our world." He charged that the Republicans wanted the American people to ignore those issues.

"I won't ignore them," he declared.

He went ahead to describe, in down-to-earth language, the two issues as they appeared to him. It was a strong address by a man who believed wholeheartedly what he was saying, and was doggedly determined to say it regardless of whether the immediate consequences were beneficial or harmful to him.

After the election, in which Texas joined the nation in giving a majority to Eisenhower, Johnson contented himself with stating simply, "We have a new leader. I won't discuss the wisdom of the choice, but he is our leader. Some people have gone off into the corner to pout. Others want to tear down, but any jackass can kick down a barn. It takes a good carpenter to build a barn. We aim to build."

Out in Arizona, Senate Democratic Leader McFarland



had been defeated. When the Democratic Senators—reduced, even though just barely, to the minority—met in their first-of-the-session conference in Washington in January of 1953, Johnson was unanimously elected Minority Leader.

At forty-four, he was the youngest man ever to be named Floor Leader of the Senate by either major party. All hands among the country's political observers agreed he had his work cut out for him.

# IX

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Not a few politically wise observers predicted that Johnson, as Senate Minority Leader in the Eighty-third Congress, would simply be administering a receivership in political bankruptcy.

They had reasonable grounds for such a belief. The Democratic Party was disorganized, deeply in debt, and without effectual leadership. A schism had long existed between the Southern and Northern wings of the party. Recriminations over the manner in which the losing national campaign had been waged were still being hurled back and forth.

One of Will Rogers' most quoted statements was "I am not a member of any organized political party. I am a Democrat." The words never seemed more applicable than at the beginning of the year 1953. The experts peered into their crystal balls and saw ahead two more years of wrangling, with the North and the South fighting for control of the defeated party.

Johnson's election to the Minority Leadership, unanimous though the vote was, had nevertheless lacked the wholehearted support of perhaps one-third of the Democrats in the Senate. Johnson himself was well aware that members of the "liberal bloc" viewed him with appre-

hension. He recognized and at times commented wryly on the circumstance that too many people in Texas considered him little better than a Communist and too many people in Washington were firmly convinced that he was a Dixiecrat.

The Texan did not deceive himself about the difficulties that lay ahead. Just the same, he had no intention at all of acting as a referee in bankruptcy for the Democratic Party.

Eisenhower's sweeping victory had not been fully shared by the Republican candidates for Congress. At the beginning of the first session of the Eighty-third, the Senate was composed of forty-eight Republicans, one Independent (Wayne Morse of Oregon, who announced that he was breaking away from the Republican Party but would vote with the Republicans to organize the Senate) and forty-seven Democrats.

This near equality in numbers could not, however, be accepted at face value. The range of differences among the Democrats in opinion on and approach to national issues was great. No one, except perhaps Lyndon Johnson, had much hope that there would be many occasions on which the forty-seven would act and vote as a unified whole.

Some of the muttering dissidents among the Democrats felt their worst fears were confirmed when Johnson immediately made it clear that, so far as he was concerned, there would be no Democratic opposition to Administration proposals merely for the sake of opposition. He strongly disagreed with the sentiment often expressed in the past by Senator Robert A. Taft, Majority Leader

of the Senate in the new Congress, that the "business of the opposition is to oppose."

Not so, said Johnson. In his view, "The role of a minority party is to hammer out a program that will solve the problems of America—not just to obstruct the work of the majority party."

"All of us," he reminded his colleagues and the country, "are Americans before we are members of any political organization. As the Senate minority, we Democrats will place the national interest above partisan considerations. When we are forced by our convictions to oppose Administration proposals, our opposition will be based on principle and will be expressed in a principled manner."

He elaborated on his concept of the proper role of a political minority in an address delivered early in the year at the Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner in New York City. He attempted no "give 'em hell" pyrotechnics. His appeal was to the thinking mind, not to the emotional viscera.

"There are two courses open to a minority party," he told the New York Democrats. "It can indulge in the politics of partisanship, or it can remain true to the politics of responsibility."

"The first course is tempting to the weak, but ultimately would be rejected by the American people. The second course is difficult, but is the road upon which we can offer leadership to the American people that will be accepted."

"Our dedication must be to the politics of responsibility—to a statesmanship which is based upon the reali-

zation that we cannot survive unless our country survives.

"No course will be successful unless that thought becomes our guiding star."

Among Senate Democrats, meanwhile, Johnson was striving to gain acceptance of the thought expressed in one of the homely sayings he remembered his father often using: "In adversity the family draws closer together." Standing squarely between the divergent wings of his party, he understood them both. He used this understanding to get them together and keep them together more often than not.

He started off by demonstrating forcibly that, with all due respect to tradition, he was not afraid to depart from the beaten path in Senate procedure. Important committee assignments customarily were made on the basis of seniority. But Johnson was able, when he made the assignments at the beginning of the session, to persuade some of the Democratic elders to give up their claims to choice committee spots. That left the way open for giving good places to the freshman Senators who had won in 1952 in spite of the party's national defeat.

A few of the elders protested. Johnson told them a story drawn from his Texas boyhood.

A lad he knew, Johnson said, on being denied a visit to a nearby city, complained bitterly that his brother had "been twowheres and I ain't been nowheres." Johnson added that he could not see the logic of placing senior Senators twowheres or even threewheres on important committees while capable freshmen languished at the bottom of the totem pole.

Every Democratic Senator wound up with at least one

desirable committee appointment. With perhaps one or two exceptions, everybody was pleased. The new members were especially happy, of course, and that was important to the success of Johnson's plan to get Democrats to get along together, because some of these Senators were among those who had not been overly enthusiastic about his election as Floor Leader.

Before long, even the old hands who had complained slightly about Johnson's departure from tradition were acclaiming the wisdom of his policy on committee assignments. Moreover, as they worked together under Johnson's adroit direction, the conservatives learned with some surprise that few liberal Senators came equipped with horns and a built-in gleam of wildness in their eyes. And the liberals found that there was more of wisdom than they had thought in some parts of the conservative philosophy.

The situation caused one deep-dyed conservative Senator to grumble good-naturedly to Johnson regarding one of the militant young liberals, "Lyndon, I'll never understand how in the world you got me to liking him so much."

The Democrats, who had been at odds with one another so long, discovered the benefits of cooperative endeavor. They began—at least in the Senate—to look for issues on which they could agree instead of searching for issues on which they were certain to disagree.

At the same time that the Minority Leader was meeting with such success in inculcating a spirit of unity into his followers, the members of the majority on the other

side of the aisle dividing the Senate chamber were having their troubles with disunity.

Early in the first session of the Eighty-third Congress, it became evident that many Republicans in Congress were unwilling or unable to depart from their instinctive attitude of opposition to proposals emanating from the Executive Branch of the government. The fact that the new occupant of the White House was a Republican seemed to make no difference to them. They had long ago become accustomed to saying "Yes" when the President said "No" and to saying "No" when the President said "Please." It was hard for them to change.

The result was that a somewhat unusual form of bipartisanship came into being. It consisted, on some basically important issues, of a combination made up of the President, some elements in his own party and a majority of Democrats *against* a sizable and vociferous group of Republicans.

That was the case when Eisenhower asked for a renewal of government reorganization powers vested in the Executive, when he submitted to Congress a resolution condemning Communist bad faith with respect to international agreements, when he urged extension of the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act, once again when he sent the Administration's Mutual Security bill to Congress.

In supporting the Administration on these and other matters, Johnson proved conclusively that his talk about "politics of responsibility" meant just what it said.

"The President must wonder at times," he commented sardonically, "whether he could not do a better job for

his country if he were not weighed down by the Republican Party.” Over in the House of Representatives, Rayburn, back at the post of Minority Leader, observed, “The present Administration needs more non-partisan help than any administration we have ever had.”

When Johnson and Rayburn could conscientiously give such help, they did so. When they found themselves opposed to Administration proposals, they did not hesitate to express their opposition in the most effective ways available to them.

In steering the course of the Senate Democrats, Johnson proceeded by a set of carefully formulated rules. Basic among them was a policy of complete flexibility to permit each issue to be judged solely on its merits rather than its political origin. Along with that went a strict avoidance of personalities and name-calling. His third rule called for ready Democratic cooperation on any issue involving the national security.

These rules worked. They enabled Johnson to build up a Democratic record based on his “politics of responsibility” philosophy, while simultaneously giving the Democrats the heady experience of working together effectively instead of flying apart in all directions when they came up against a controversial question.

With a man as popular as Eisenhower in the White House, this was obviously sound political strategy. But it was more than that. It was an expression in action, not words, of the Minority Leader’s conviction that the American people were not best served by extreme partisanship in government.

Naturally, he was not always in agreement with the



President's proposals. The man who had refused to be a rubber stamp for a Chief Executive of his own party could hardly be expected to give blind approval to every suggestion or request of a Republican President.

He resisted the Administration's efforts to cut down the strength of the Air Force, an old and often-fought battle for him. He opposed Administration-sponsored reductions in the work of the Soil Conservation Service. He castigated a plan to give the Secretary of Agriculture unlimited authority to reorganize his department.

Whether in opposition to the President or in agreement with him, Johnson was able to carry most of the Senate Democrats along with him.

His greatest strength as Minority Leader was the effectiveness of his personal work with individual Senators. He indulged in no tirades on the Senate floor. He never attempted to bulldoze, either publicly or privately, those who disagreed with him. He never questioned another Senator's motives, no matter how strongly he might doubt the soundness of his judgment. Above all else, he devoted himself for many hours a day to applying all that he had learned through the years about bringing men together in their thinking.

His friend, Dick Russell, gave a candid and realistic summation of Johnson's assets at this period: "He doesn't have the best mind on the Democratic side of the Senate; he isn't the best orator; he isn't the best parliamentarian. But he's the best combination of all those qualities."

As for the Republican Senators, he was on excellent personal terms with most of them. They liked him, and Johnson always responded instantly to friendliness. He

and Majority Leader Taft, partisan foes though they were, regarded each other with genuine regard and friendship.

There was a special significance to this friendship. Outwardly, two men could hardly have been more different. Johnson was gregarious, sentimental, persuasive, all fire and energy. Taft, on the other hand, was usually withdrawn and often tactless, proceeding with his business, as William S. White wrote in his perceptive book about the Ohioan, "in the flat uncaring manner of a man driving a nail into a board." White correctly pointed out that Taft wholly lacked the gift for people in the mass that Johnson possessed in such abundance.

Yet the two men not only got along well in performing their official duties but enjoyed a warm personal relationship as well. This was born after they assumed the Senate leadership of their respective parties. Prior to that time they had not really known each other at all.

Each approached the other warily during the early days of the 1953 session, but the feeling-out period did not last long. They came to be closer than perhaps any other two members of the Senate. Johnson, White reported in the book about Taft, "was one of the few men who could persistently heckle Taft, as he often did with soft mutters across the three feet of aisle space that separated their desks in the Senate, and not be glared down."

Their mutual regard had its genesis, no doubt, in the respect each felt toward the other as a man. Neither ever entertained the slightest doubt about the other's integrity. Both literally loved the Senate. Each valued a worthy

opponent, and neither of them had any use for the kind of aimless, time-wasting chitchat that Johnson jeered at as "just visiting" and Taft forthrightly scorned as "non-sense."

It was necessary for the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader to work together if the Senate's business was to function properly. In the case of Taft and Johnson, both found the association a pleasure as well as a duty.

When Taft's tragic death came in the summer of 1953, Johnson stood up in the Senate with tears in his eyes to say, choking over the words, "No more honorable man has ever sat as a Senate leader for any party. I have lost one of the best friends I ever had."

During all this time, while he was working with the Democrats who composed his Senate constituency, Johnson never neglected his constituents in Texas. It was all very well to be Floor Leader and ex-officio chairman of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee. But he knew the people back home who wrote him four or five hundred letters a day, most of them containing requests that he do something or other, were mainly interested in his work for them as their representative in the United States Senate, and it was they who could keep him or refuse to keep him in the Senate.

He filled their requests when he could. When he could not, he explained why and if possible offered a substitute service. He saw that all the letters were answered promptly.

He kept a stream of news flowing out of his office to the Washington representatives of Texas newspapers. He

sent a "newsletter" regularly to the several hundred weekly newspapers in his state. He recorded a weekly radio "Report to the People" for use by Texas stations.

In the Senate, he supported and at times initiated legislation to provide assistance for drought-stricken areas, to improve the cotton acreage allotment system, to provide rural telephones as part of the Rural Electrification Administration's program, to aid military personnel and ex-servicemen, to authorize Federal assistance in solving Texas' long-range water supply problem.

He felt he knew pretty well what Texans generally wanted and needed in the way of legislation. He labored incessantly to get it for them. His rapid rise in the Democratic Party had not lessened one iota his determination to be the best Senator Texas ever had.

He was working harder than ever before in his life. At times he conducted his business on the run—literally. One afternoon, a staff member recalled, he and the Senator left the Senate Office Building to go over to the other side of the Capitol to record a radio broadcast. Johnson's car was parked only a few feet from the door of the building. But he actually sprinted that short distance.

"Lyndon," his wife complained, "acts like there's never going to be a tomorrow."

A typical day in the life of the Minority Leader was described at the time in a story written by Elizabeth Carpenter, Washington correspondent for several Texas newspapers. She wrote :

"Johnson's day begins at 6 when he starts reading the Washington morning newspaper and the *Congressional Record* which is delivered to his door. He shaves, bathes

and calls his office to check on developments with the early staff, which has the mail open and the work under way. He usually talks to a Senator or two before breakfast.

"He breakfasts, and the car which is assigned to the Senate Democratic Leader picks him up at exactly ten minutes to 9. The driver has *The New York Times* for him daily, and he reads it on the way to work.

"Arriving at the office shortly before 9:30, Johnson confers briefly with the heads of his office staff. Then he starts receiving Texas callers. From 9:30 until 11:45 he talks to all the visiting Texans who want to see him. Then he rushes to the Senate chamber. . . .

"Sometimes he can sneak off for lunch, but other times he doesn't get to eat. He likes to have lunch served in his Capitol office when it's possible so he can dine with a group of Democratic Senators. Johnson can't put up with wasted time. So if he's worried about a farm problem he will invite to lunch Senators Russell, Allen J. Ellender of Louisiana and Clinton P. Anderson of New Mexico, all agricultural experts. If it's housing he may eat with Senators Burnet Maybank of South Carolina and Paul Douglas of Illinois. If it's budget or finance, he may have Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia or Walter George of Georgia. A defense problem means Senators Russell and Stuart Symington of Missouri. . . .

"Secretaries bring mail over to the Senate for Johnson to read and dictate replies. Texans who went to see him and missed him in the morning are brought over. He does a lot of conferring in cloakrooms with other Senators of both parties because he is convinced that no Mi-

nority Leader can be successful unless he has the respect and confidence of the majority party, too.

“The Senate usually stays in session until 6. When it ends, he heads back for the office. There he dictates more mail, reads Texas newspapers, returns telephone calls which have piled up during the day, checks with assistants on the progress they have made on assignments he gave them in the morning and talks with a few Senators. Often he goes back over to the Capitol to talk with Sam Rayburn before going home. These sessions explain the close teamwork between the Democratic Party in the two houses.

“It is at least 8 when he heads home. There he eats and falls into bed to read the evening newspapers and some of the papers he has brought home. He usually doesn’t get up until morning—going to sleep when he finishes reading.”

The pace was a grinding one day after day.

In the closing hours of the first session of the Eighty-third Congress, Johnson received what was to him a most acceptable reward for his efforts, when a number of Senators reviewed his seven months of leadership.

It was started by Albert Gore of Tennessee, with whom Johnson had served in the House of Representatives. Gore was one of the freshman Senators who had profited by the leader’s policy of giving desirable committee assignments to new members, and the Tennessean expressed his gratitude. Then he said of Johnson :

“A strong party man, nevertheless he can and does place patriotism ahead of partisanship. His ability and his standards of integrity are, in my opinion, largely re-

sponsible for his phenomenal success as a party leader. Furthermore, as a Senator of his own party, I can testify that he has been a unifying factor unequaled since I have known the United States Senate. I think it is fair to say that at the beginning of this session the Democrats in the Senate were divided; but we end this session united."

Gore, one of the youngest men in the Senate, was succeeded on the floor by Green of Rhode Island, the oldest. Green also mentioned the tender, loving care Johnson had accorded young Senators and added, "I am grateful for the consideration he has shown to the older Senators and the idiosyncrasy which he has evidenced of himself being capable of understanding, rather than of misunderstanding. Both old and young have followed him gladly."

Mike Mansfield of Montana, another of Johnson's former House colleagues and also a new member of the Senate, declared that after eleven years of service in Congress he now felt for the first time "that I am a member of a unified party."

"As a Democrat," said Georgia's Russell, "I am proud of the record he has made. As an American, that pride is doubled."

Lister Hill of Alabama joined in: "Time and time again on this floor during this session we have seen our leader demonstrate his exceptional ability, his courage and, most of all, his devotion to our country and its welfare."

Lehman of New York, acknowledging the existence of "certain differences of opinion" among Democrats, stated that, nevertheless, "the area of agreement we have reached today is far greater than the area of difference."

"I do not believe," said youthful John Fitzgerald Kennedy of Massachusetts, "any man ever took over a more difficult assignment than did Lyndon Johnson the first of this year. If the Democratic Party today stands united, and once more is asserting its voice throughout the land, I think that is due to no other person."

Even some Republicans spoke up about Johnson's "cooperation" and "nonpartisanship," among them William F. Knowland of California, who had succeeded Taft as Majority Leader.

At one time three Senators—Stuart Symington of Missouri, Edwin C. Johnson of Colorado and the courtly Clyde R. Hoey of North Carolina—were on their feet seeking recognition from the presiding officer in order that they could participate in the outpouring of encomiums. They, and others, stressed repeatedly the harmony which now prevailed among Democrats, thanks to the leadership of the man from Texas.

It is not unusual, of course, for Senators to speak highly of other members of "The Club." The Senate is, in many respects, a sentimental institution. Every so often something causes a rash of tributes to some individual, living or dead. But on this occasion, in the view of some longtime observers of the senatorial scene, the sentiments expressed went beyond the call of dutiful courtesy. There was a general feeling that Johnson had fully earned the plaudits he received.

Events of the session had borne out the statement of a writer for *Time* magazine that "Lyndon Johnson is, for the Democrats, exactly the right man in the right place at the right time."



# X

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Viewed with cold objectivity, Johnson's personal political status at the end of the 1953 session of Congress did not appear to be as demonstrably favorable as his standing among Senate Democrats. And he would be up for reelection in 1954.

Only the year before he had campaigned vigorously for a presidential candidate who had been turned down by a majority of the voters of Texas. Since then, no matter how much he had cooperated with the new Administration on certain issues, he had been the very active leader of the Senate opposition.

Besides, no one could say with certainty how much of the bitter feeling engendered by the 1948 senatorial campaign remained alive in the minds of those who had opposed him. Johnson himself remembered all too clearly the prediction of a Federal judge, during court proceedings following his squeak-through victory in the Democratic primary, that the man finally winning the Senate seat, whether it was Johnson or Coke Stevenson, would be a one-term Senator.

He knew, however, that he had worked hard at his job. He had done a great many things for the people of Texas since 1948. He knew also that he had won as loyal sup-

porters some of those who had fought him hard in that year. He had kept his statewide campaign organization alive and vigorous.

Weighing all these factors, he felt he stood a good chance of being named to a second term. But it was not something he proposed to take for granted. Within a few hours after the adjournment of Congress he was on an airplane bound for Texas.

He had one simple purpose in mind: to see and talk with as many Texans as he possibly could during the remaining five months of the year.

He remembered the advice a seasoned colleague had given him when he first entered Congress. "The best way to keep your job," the oldster had told him, "is to use your franking privilege in Washington and your heel leather when you're back home." So Johnson embarked on a hard-driving "grass roots and heel leather" tour of Texas.

He let it be known through the press that he was available and invitations flooded him: to make speeches, attend barbecues, be honor guest at luncheon club meetings, open county fairs, ride horseback in parades, dedicate public buildings, appear before school assemblies. He accepted as many of the invitations as he could.

Talking to a newspaper reporter soon after his arrival in Texas, Johnson said he was trying to follow what a wise man had once told him were three good rules in politics: Do right; make yourself available; tell about your product.

"I am trying to report to the folks here at home about what Congress has been doing, especially what the Senate

has been doing," he said. "I want them to know Lyndon Johnson, so that when I ask them for their votes they won't be likely to say they elect me and then never hear of me again. I want them to ask me questions about their problems, and naturally I want to do everything a Senator can do to help them."

He cut a wide swath over Texas, covering every part of the state and making well over two hundred talks to every kind of audience imaginable. The talks were labeled "nonpolitical" and, strictly speaking, they were; but Johnson did not neglect to tell about the product he was promoting.

One of his Washington staff members, who had never before seen Johnson in action among the voters, was amazed by the performance of his boss in this role. He found out that Johnson was as popular with "the folks" as he was with Senators.

"Why, he's a hero to the people down there," he later reported to some of his co-workers on Capitol Hill. "We would hit some little town and the Senator would be out on the street almost before the car stopped rolling. He'd start down the sidewalk, shaking hands, and pretty soon he would have quite a crowd following him—kids asking for his autograph, nice old ladies telling him what a fine boy he was, farmers grabbing him by the arm and saying they knew he would look out for their interests. I never saw anything like it."

In his formal talks, he discussed America's foreign policy and the farm problem; told how the Democrats in Congress had aided the President on many occasions; expressed his enduring belief in the future of the nation;

and emphasized the importance of working for peace from a position of strength.

By the time he returned to Washington in January, many leading Texas newspapers were saying editorially that Johnson should be returned to the Senate for another term without opposition.

He was not quite that fortunate, for Dudley Dougherty, a wealthy young oil man with views that were conservative even for a rich Texan, announced as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for Senator. Johnson stayed on his job in Washington and never once took official notice of his opponent.

In the Democratic primary of July, 1954, he won the nomination by a vote of nearly three to one. It was a result that gave him deep personal satisfaction as he contrasted it with the narrow and controversial margin by which he had attained the nomination in 1948.

In the Senate, meanwhile, Johnson had continued to follow the pattern set during his first year as Minority Leader. With Joe McCarthy on the rampage, the Republicans were more divided than ever. The McCarthy political philosophy was far removed, of course, from Johnson's own views. He was strategist enough to take advantage of the uproar the Wisconsin Senator constantly created among members of his own party.

The Republican differences gave Johnson the opportunity to underline the fact that the Democrats had achieved and were maintaining a rare degree of unity, and the further fact that, with respect to some matters of fundamental importance to the national well-being, they

gave Eisenhower stronger support than he could count on receiving from many Republican Senators.

The Johnson pattern retained its effectiveness. In fact, it worked even better in this session than in the preceding one. There was no longer any necessity for him to prove himself in the leadership. Nobody was talking these days about "political bankruptcy" for the Democratic Party.

Johnson was by no means unmindful of the congressional elections coming up in November. His efforts as Minority Leader in the Senate were directed at building a Democratic record on which Democratic candidates for Congress could successfully contend for victory at the polls.

As a Democrat in a position of leadership, he was convinced the greatest service he could render his party was to guide it into and along the path of moderation. He believed the party had made great strides in regaining much of the respect it had lost because of accusations that it was irresponsible. He wanted to hold those gains and add to them.

"Eventually," he said, "the people will reject any political organization that is ruled by the extremists, either of the right or the left. If I can leave any imprint on the Democratic Party, I want it to have the effect of making ours a moderate party, not a party of extremes.

He succeeded in making the issue of the 1954 campaign the "politics of responsibility" record of the Democrats in Congress.

Johnson was an exceedingly active participant. He made a whirlwind campaign through the nine states of Colorado, Washington, Montana, Wyoming, Utah,

Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico and Minnesota. His basic theme was the need for formulating a national program that "would advance the interests of America, regardless of party."

He said the Republicans were concentrating on the "myth" that there would be a "cold war," which would stymie the legislative process, if a Democratic Congress should be elected. "If there is any cold war, the Republicans will have to start it themselves," he declared. "We Democrats will be too busy trying to transact the nation's business.

"However," he added, "I can well understand why the Republicans are so quick to accept the cold war interpretation of American politics. They have been carrying on that kind of war among themselves for the past two years. It seems only natural to them that they will have to carry on such a war against the Democrats."

When he returned to Texas at the end of his campaign tour, Johnson predicted the Democrats would win both houses of Congress. The Republicans, he said, would have no one but themselves to blame for such an outcome.

"The basic issue which has stirred the American people," he continued, "is the inability of Republican legislators to cooperate with the President, the American people, or with one another. The overwhelming desire of Americans is for a responsible Congress which will transact the people's business with a minimum of showmanship and a maximum of efficiency."

A few days after the election, which gave the Democrats control of Congress (although by only one seat in

the Senate), Johnson went to Washington, where the Senate was to meet for the purpose of considering the resolution proposing censure of Joe McCarthy. He held a news conference soon after his arrival. Representatives of press, radio and television jammed his office to hear him explain what the Democrats would do in the new Congress.

In a formal, although unwritten, statement and in response to reporters' questions, he outlined a picture of what could be expected.

First of all, he made it clear that the Democrats would not go into the coming session "in a belligerent frame of mind." "On the contrary," Johnson earnestly assured the news gatherers, "we will go into that session with a pledge of cooperation from our side and a plea for cooperation from the other side. We will be willing and eager to meet the President more than halfway."

He said, "There need be no legislative stalemate. There need be no controversy for the sake of partisan controversy."

He expressed the opinion that the closeness of the election results showed that "the American people rejected extreme partisan appeals" and "voted on a highly selective basis."

"I believe," he said, "they are looking to members of both parties in Congress to put the national welfare first, and partisan considerations a very low second. The Democrats in Congress are going to do their best to live up to this expectation of the people."

Having thus made it plain that the Democrats still rejected the "cold war" idea, he went ahead to announce

that a meeting would be held shortly of members of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee, along with those Democrats who would take over as committee chairmen in the new Congress. By the time the congressional session convened in January, he said, details of the legislative program to be proposed by the Democratic majority would have been thoroughly worked out.

"This will be a constructive program, tailor-made to fit the present needs of the nation," he stated. "It will deal with issues vital to the continued security and progress of the United States. I mean such issues as an enlightened foreign policy, an adequate defense program, and domestic policies designed to pass the basic test of what is best for Americans generally.

"President Eisenhower has said that he is determined to be the President of all Americans. I see no reason why a Democratic Congress and a President holding to that objective should not be able to work together in harmony on such issues as those I have mentioned."

Johnson explained, too, that the Senate leadership was working closely with the House leadership. He had stopped off in Bonham, Texas, on his way to Washington for a conference with Rayburn, who once again would assume the House Speakership in January.

"This entire program will be coordinated through the Senate Democratic Policy Committee and the leadership organization of the House of Representatives," he said. "Out of deference to the President, the program will not be presented until we have heard his State of the Union message. We hope there will be few points of difference."



He was following his usual policy of touching all the bases. The few remaining weeks of the year were crammed with conferences and planning for the Majority Leader role he would assume in the Eighty-fourth Congress.

# XI

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Johnson was now forty-six years of age, the youngest man ever to serve as Senate Majority Leader of either party. Even so, he could look back on some twenty-two years of experience in government and eighteen years of service in Congress. His black hair was beginning to gray and to slip back in front, and a few lines had appeared on his keen face. These outward evidences of maturity were more than matched by the knowledge he had gained about how to get things done in the Senate.

He faced the job ahead of him with undisguised relish. He conceived of it primarily as a sort of general managership. As a matter of fact, floor leaders were officially known as managers in the early days of Congress. Then, as now, the man holding the majority post in the Senate had the responsibility of managing procedures there and keeping the legislative process in as smooth-flowing motion as possible. It was no kind of work for a lone operator, but Johnson had never been one and now he threw himself more than ever into cooperative endeavor.

During the first six months of 1955, his desk in the Senate was the focal point of the chamber. That was where the signals were called.

Men came to his desk who seemed to have little more

in common than the fact that all were United States Senators: Byrd of Virginia, whose inborn conservatism truly represented the squirearchy of his state; sharp-tongued Wayne Morse, the eternal rebel from Oregon; Minority Leader Knowland, stubborn and dependable; fast-talking Hubert Humphrey, with an opinion on everything and a superb facility in expressing all his opinions; Leverett Saltonstall, whose very appearance spoke in modulated tones of his Massachusetts background—these and many others.

“Come, now,” Johnson said to these men, “and let us reason together!”

He was the manager and he managed, not in the sense of bossing, but in the sense of coordinating, of deciding who would take the lead in regard to a specific bill, of bringing men and their ideas together.

If he was accused of compromising in order to reach agreement, he retorted that history showed American democracy was born in compromise and must depend, for its effective functioning, on the give-and-take of friendly men who respect one another’s integrity and refrain from questioning one another’s motives.

If newspaper columnists, who thrived on controversy, complained that the Senate machinery was working *too* smoothly, he voiced his conviction that the American people wanted their government to operate quietly and efficiently. “I don’t think they want anybody to rock the boat just for the fun of it,” he declared.

If some of the fringe organizations accused the Majority Leader of “betraying great principles” and “abandoning the true Democrats,” Johnson said nothing. But

he would be on the Senate floor to listen when a Senator of whom the complaining group highly approved stood up to defend his leadership.

In keeping the business of the Senate moving along, he worked closely with Knowland. Agreement between the two on legislative procedure—regarding which bills would be taken up on a certain day and which held over—was a necessity.

“There never was a motion made to proceed to consideration of a bill that Bill Knowland didn’t have his initials on,” Johnson said later in reviewing the session. “There were no surprises. There were no tricks. There was no hot-airing.”

Johnson’s method of operation was to grease the skids before a bill ever reached the Senate for action. This process began with the committees. He constantly insisted that his committee chairmen and their members give full attention to their homework on every bill referred to them. When an item of proposed legislation was referred to the Senate, he wanted to have available every last pertinent fact about it.

He kept a running check on the sentiment of Democratic Senators regarding controversial legislation. When the time came for a vote, he was almost always able to predict what the outcome would be. And, of course, if he felt the outcome was not going to be to his liking, the time did not come for a vote until after he had exerted his powers of persuasion to their fullest extent.

Sometimes he used more than persuasion. Once, when he thought the vote on a pending bill was going to be about as close as possible, he managed to defer the roll

call until a Democratic member, who had been out of town, arrived by air at National Airport and was rushed to the Capitol with a motorcycle escort. Incidentally, Johnson had counted heads too pessimistically this time. He had several more votes than he needed.

In considering Administration proposals, the Democrats held steadfastly to the policy of responsibility they had adopted when they were in the minority.

When the President submitted the Formosa Resolution, serving notice on the Chinese Communists not to advance against the Nationalists on the Island of Formosa, it was Johnson who took the lead in urging its approval.

Later, as the President was preparing to go to the Geneva Conference, Johnson jumped on a resolution by Joe McCarthy which would have hamstrung the Chief Executive in dealing with the Russian leaders. The Majority Leader adroitly forced Knowland, Hickenlooper of Iowa and other onetime McCarthy supporters to help nail down the coffin lid. The Senator from Wisconsin was able to muster only three votes besides his own in support of his resolution.

Johnson did more than any other man in the Senate to get legislation for Eisenhower's world trade program out of the Finance Committee, of which he was a member, and through the Senate in an acceptable form.

Nothing was happening to bear out the prediction made in the 1954 campaign that election of a Democratic Congress would give birth to a regressive "cold war" between the executive and legislative branches of the government.

Reviewing such instances of Democratic cooperation with the Administration, columnist Walter Lippmann, an outspoken admirer of the President, commented: "I do not think it is any exaggeration to say that Mr. Eisenhower's success as President began when the Republicans lost control of Congress and the standing committees. In his first two years he had suffered an almost unbroken record of frustration and of domination by the senior Republicans, and particularly the Republican committee chairmen in the Senate."

On the liberal side, Senator Hubert Humphrey took the floor of the Senate to praise the Majority Leader as "a genius in the art of the legislative process." As for himself, he said, "I have no hesitation in saying that I am proud of the leadership and of the skills portrayed by the Senator from Texas."

Senator Richard Neuberger of Oregon, a new member of the Senate's "liberal bloc" and one for whom Johnson had campaigned in 1954, also made it clear that he did not agree with criticism of the Majority Leader. "I think Johnson is as liberal as he can be and still continue as the effective leader of the Senators who sit on the Democratic aisle of the Senate," Neuberger said bluntly.

Traditional Democratic causes were not being deserted by Johnson. No presidential proposals received automatic approval from the Senate Democrats. Each one was subjected to a searching examination.

When the Democrats disliked what such an inspection revealed, they endeavored either to kill the proposal or to bring about the modifications they wanted. Most often they were successful.

The President asked for an increase in the minimum wage rate from seventy-five to ninety cents. The Democrats insisted on and obtained a dollar.

The Senate followed Johnson's counsel in throwing out the President's highway aid bill and passing one of its own.

The President asked for a six per cent pay increase for postal workers. The Senate voted a raise of eight per cent after Eisenhower had vetoed a slightly higher increase, and the President signed the Senate's bill.

The Democrats believed the Eisenhower-approved housing bill did too little about slum clearance. They rammed through a measure authored by one of their own, John Sparkman of Alabama, which provided for more slum clearance.

It was not surprising that some observers said the theme song the Democrats tauntingly rendered to the Administration had the refrain, "Anything you can do, I can do better."

Day and night Johnson courted and cajoled his slim majority. He was now reaping the benefits of the exhaustive spadework he had done for two years as Minority Leader. The Senate was by no means a one-man band under Johnson's direction, but there was never any doubt at all about who was the leader of the band.

His deliberate purpose, as summarized by Arthur Krock of *The New York Times*, was to make campaign issues "the business of the titular party leaders and the national committees," with members of Congress left free to devote themselves solely to considering legislation, "preferably," Krock added, "on its merits." In following

this policy, Johnson considered that he was simultaneously serving both his country and his party.

“The Democratic Party is big enough for all men who believe in doing what’s best for America,” he proclaimed in an address in the spring of that year. “There are divergent views about how best to accomplish that.

“I believe good Democrats should stress and emphasize areas of agreement. They can meet on more things than they can divide on. There are times when they must divide; but when they do, it must be on the basis of conviction, not personality.

“There are many things advanced in the name of the Democratic Party I am unable to embrace and subscribe to. But a party, like a country, is subject to the rule of the majority.

“When I find I don’t subscribe to the views of some of the party’s leaders, I differ with dignity and with whatever effectiveness I can muster.

“I ask no Democrat to embrace everything I believe in and I reserve the same right for myself.

“But I’ll say this,” the Senate Democratic Leader concluded firmly. “The Democratic Party at its worst is better for the country than the Republican Party at its best.”

It was a statement giving notice to members of both parties that he was and would remain a staunch partisan, even though he stood ready to subordinate partisanship to other considerations when the facts warranted such action. He never denied being a partisan.

In such statements as this, Johnson gave repeated proof that he was still the man with a purpose. He was deter-



mined that he would spare no effort to cause members of his party and, so far as possible, all Senators to labor cooperatively to advance the national welfare. And his immediate object was to bring about passage of legislation in this session that would reflect justified credit on the congressional majority.

If he felt the occasion demanded, Johnson could always obtain a solid, or nearly solid, Democratic vote in the Senate. He had an uncanny ability for winning the close ones. As the session glided onward and Capitol Hill newsmen became aware of the kind of record the Democratic majority was making in dealing with a Republican Administration, the reporters began to ask Johnson how he could so consistently carry along with him a majority composed of such dissimilar elements.

"I don't carry them along," Johnson answered. "When the Democrats vote together, they do so because each man has become convinced he should vote that way.

"Most of the credit for this convincing belongs to our committee chairmen. This Senate has the master craftsmen of all time in charge of the committees. That's where the most important work is done, and there has never been a Senate that has had men who were more experienced in the subject matters with which they deal than this one."

His committee chairmen, Johnson pointed out, were "old pros." Some of them had been in the Senate fifteen, twenty, even twenty-five years or more. Even the younger ones among them mostly had imposing records of public service. They knew their subjects, whether defense or finance, housing or agriculture or foreign policy,

world trade or labor. When problems came up in any governmental field, they understood how to find out the answers. They worked hard and, since they were professionals, they worked without any wasteful spinning of wheels.

That was Johnson's answer to questions about the "Why?" of Senate efficiency. Its accuracy was borne out by the results. And, of course, as Stewart Alsop explained in his syndicated newspaper column, Johnson himself was an "old pro." Said Alsop:

"There is always something peculiarly satisfying about watching a genuine professional at work, whether on the baseball diamond or on the floor of the United States Senate. Anyone who wants to see in action the best professional Floor Leader of our time need only visit the Senate gallery at a tense legislative moment and keep his eye on the tall, lanky, slow-moving form of the Majority Leader as he ambles about on the floor below.

"Like a great professional athlete, Lyndon Johnson of Texas makes no wasted motion. A word here and there, a casual political arm around a recalcitrant shoulder, a brief, companionable colloquy with his opposite number, William Knowland of California, and the chances are that the bill under consideration will slide through the Senate almost without debate."

Exactly that happened time and again during the first session of the Eighty-fourth Congress. The Senate, under Johnson's calming guidance, not only had a new dignity and friendship but also had a new, swift pace. Bills were rarely buried in committees. There were no filibusters, no night sessions. The Senate was in session about two-



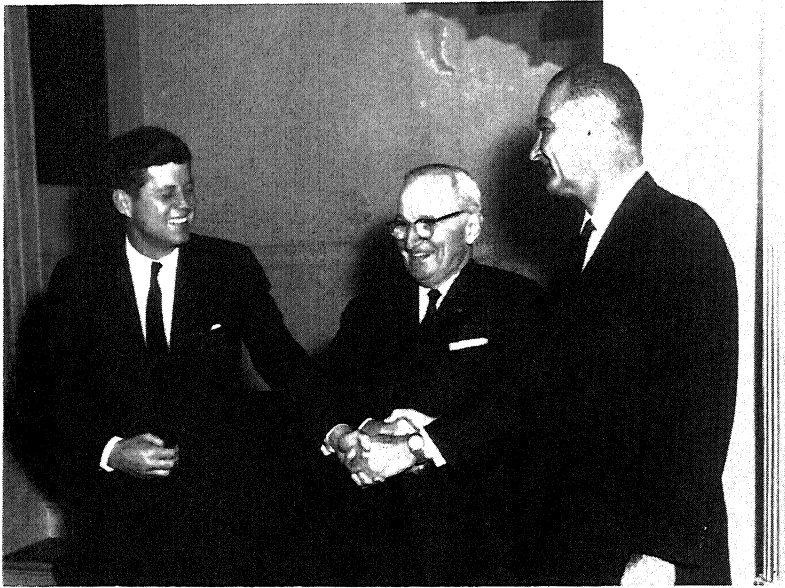
With former President Truman and Speaker Rayburn, the Majority Leader visited an old friend, former Vice President John Nance Garner, at his home in Uvalde, Texas, in 1958.

The 1960 official Democratic campaign photograph.





Speaker Sam Rayburn administered the oath of office to Vice President Johnson in inauguration ceremonies on January 20, 1961.



1962: the past, the present and the future after a White House luncheon.



Formal dinner at the White House, January 21, 1963.

thirds as long, measured in legislative hours, as the comparable session of the Eighty-third Congress. But the box score of achievement was impressive. In bringing an atmosphere of moderation and a willingness to give and take into the Senate, Johnson had turned it into a house of unusual accomplishment.

He was frankly proud of what had been done. The record, he felt, more than justified the policy he had set up as a guiding star for the Democratic majority.

At the end of June, when it was generally agreed that Congress would adjourn in another comparatively easy thirty days, Johnson was putting out at weekly intervals a list of the principal accomplishments of the session. Six weeks after the session ended, a complete digest of legislative action was compiled by his staff and printed as a Senate document, along with a statement by Johnson.

This statement, giving as it did an accounting of his stewardship during his first year as Majority Leader, was of more than minor significance. It was a summing up of the legislative record of the Democratic Congress during the third year of the Eisenhower Administration. It also set forth in abbreviated form Johnson's basic governmental philosophy.

The statement follows:

"The first session of the Eighty-fourth Congress can rightly claim credit for many achievements.

"Its deliberations were conducted in the workmanlike, efficient manner that befits prudent legislators.

"It passed many measures designed to promote and preserve the prosperity of workers, farmers and businessmen. . . .

“But the crowning achievement of the session was to unite the nation behind a policy designed to protect our freedoms and preserve peace. The voices of discord were reduced to a minimum and the preservation of America was given priority over petty partisanship.

“From a statistical standpoint, the record is impressive. There were no all-night sessions; no overextended debates; no exhausting arguments to leave heated passions smoldering. Nevertheless, more responsible and thorough work was done than in many, many years.

“A comparison of this session with the first session of the Eighty-third Congress illustrates the point. This session passed about 30 per cent more bills in about 30 per cent less time; it left fewer measures hanging on the calendar and fewer measures lost in committee files; it confirmed nearly forty thousand presidential nominations as compared to about 23,500 during the first session of the Eighty-third Congress.

“Furthermore, this Senate session tackled important and highly controversial legislation—minimum wage, public housing, upper Colorado River project, long-range trade program. No one of these bills took longer than three days to pass.

“But the box score—as a measure of achievement—is inadequate, standing alone. Lists of bills which were—and were not—passed are interesting topics for study. But the real test of a Congress is whether it met the problems before the people in a spirit of prudence and a spirit of patriotism.

“By this standard, the first session of the Eighty-fourth Congress can submit its record to the people without hesitation.



“This session demonstrated that national unity can be achieved in the field of foreign policy when men put national interest above partisan interest.

“The objectives of foreign policy should be to promote and preserve the security and the integrity of the United States. From the very beginning of this Congress, the Democratic leadership made it clear that they would support the President in any effort to obtain those objectives.

“That promise was fulfilled.

“It was fulfilled in the Formosa Resolution when the President sought to draw a line against Chinese Communist aggression.

“It was fulfilled in the approval of the Paris pacts, which laid the cornerstone for the defenses of Europe against communism.

“It was fulfilled in the ratification of the Austrian Treaty, which set the stage for the Big Four conference.

“It was fulfilled during the Big Four conference itself when the Democratic leadership unhesitatingly endorsed the President’s disarmament inspection proposal.

“The future of the nation was at stake. This Congress—unlike some of its predecessors—thought that in such times the country should be united rather than divided. . . .

“This session also ruled out the floor of the Senate as a partisan arena for harassing a President just before he sets out to attend a conference with the heads of foreign states. This is a precedent which could well be studied by others.

“In terms of quality, the legislative standards of this session were high. . . . Some of the measures made

headlines, such as the trade program, the Reserve bill, the housing bill, the minimum wage bill, and Federal pay legislation. Others—fully as important—did not receive as much attention but shared equally in making up the character of this Congress.

“Interest rates were reduced on farm loans and programs were instituted to cushion the shock to agriculture of natural disasters. The penalties were increased for anti-trust violations and greater protections against market manipulations were enacted for the commodity exchanges.

“A commission was established to make a thorough overhaul of the Federal security program—a long overdue step. A tax loophole was closed which would have cost the Treasury at least a billion dollars.

“These are only a few of the bills that were passed—bills designed to help Americans individually and collectively.

“This session conducted itself in the finest tradition of responsible legislative conduct. The President’s recommendations were considered thoroughly and examined from the standpoint of how they fitted into the needs of the country. In many cases they were improved; in some they were passed practically without change; in others they were not acted upon at all. In short, Congress did not conduct itself as a rubber stamp but discharged its constitutional obligation of representing the American people.

“In no case was the Senate floor turned into a political convention or a political ward meeting at a time when the Senate was scheduled to consider legislation.

“There will, of course, always be arguments as to the measures that the Senate did or did not pass. But those arguments are inevitably matters of judgment. The Senate is responsible to the people of the country and only to the people of the country. It is not an adjunct of the Executive or the Judiciary but an independent body elected to represent the will of the people.

“There can be only one judge of success or failure, and that is the people themselves.”

This statement was issued in mid-September. Meanwhile, Johnson had suffered a heart attack that took him out of action during the last month of the congressional session. But, so far as the Senate was concerned, it was still his session and the pride he felt in its accomplishments was deeply personal.

## XII

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Each daily session of the United States Senate is opened with a prayer either by the Chaplain or a visiting minister. When the Senate convened on Tuesday, July 5, 1955, Chaplain Frederick Brown Harris offered a prayer which concluded with these words:

“We think this day with tender solicitude of the stalwart leader in this body who so recently spoke from his place of high responsibility with passion and deep sincerity regarding pending public questions. Now that suddenly he has been stricken, in this time of anxiety we pray for his family watching by his side.

“In Thy will we lift our petition that the dedicated skill of physicians and the ministry of nurses may soon restore him to his dear ones and to his place in the councils of the nation in this crucial day. Guide his colleagues upon whom for the time the mantle rests.

“May each of us in his place where we stand do our best as each day beckons, knowing that the night cometh when our work will be done. Amen.”

For two days newspapers and the air waves had carried bulletins about Johnson's heart attack and attendant developments. But there had been no official statement from attending physicians beyond the initial announcement

that the attack was "moderately severe." Now, as Acting Majority Leader Earle C. Clements obtained recognition from the President of the Senate to offer a statement, Senators all over the chamber turned their heads to listen with serious interest.

Clements told briefly how Johnson had suffered the attack at the beginning of what was to have been a week-end of rest. He then read a statement prepared by Dr. James C. Cain, a Mayo Brothers physician and longtime friend of the Johnson family who had flown to Washington to consult with the attending physicians.

The statement, short and to the point, was more reassuring than not:

"Senator Lyndon B. Johnson has had a myocardial infarction of a moderately severe character. He was quite critically ill immediately following the attack but his recovery has been satisfactory.

"His physicians agree that under no circumstances can he return to his duties during this session. He cannot undertake any business whatsoever for a period of months.

"However, if there are no further attacks of a severe character and his recovery continues to be satisfactory, he should be able to return to the Senate in January."

Clements made no attempt to interpret this statement. Having read it, he went on to give such details as he knew about Johnson's condition. The stricken man was allowed no visitors other than his wife, who had moved into the hospital to be with him. Johnson's mother had flown to Washington from Austin—the first airplane

trip of her life. Johnson was said to be resting comfortably. He was, however, still in an oxygen tent.

"Under the circumstances," the Kentucky Senator continued, "it becomes my duty, as Acting Majority Leader, to assume his responsibilities. I have no hesitancy in confessing that it is difficult and disturbing to step into the shoes of such a man, even though my tenancy is only temporary.

"During this session, Lyndon Johnson has set standards of leadership that have won him the deserved acclaim of all who are devoted to democratic ideals of government. His hard work and his timely efforts have reflected credit not only upon him but upon the entire Senate.

"As a close personal friend, I am deeply devoted to Lyndon Johnson. As an American citizen, I am proud of the opportunity to be associated with him in any capacity.

"I doubt," Clements said earnestly, "if there is a member of the Senate, on either side of the aisle, who does not look upon Lyndon Johnson as a friend."

What followed immediately was testimony to the accuracy of the Kentuckian's estimate of Johnson. Clements' statement touched off a chain reaction as Democratic and Republican Senators sought for suitable words to express their deep personal feeling about the Majority Leader.

Lehman of New York, who had so often crossed swords with Johnson on party policy, proposed a resolution "That the Senate stand in silent prayer to the Almighty for the early and complete recovery of the Majority Leader, the beloved senior Senator from Texas." In an unprecedented action, all members and all other occupants of the cham-

ber stood together in silence as each individual offered his own prayer.

A constantly recurring theme in the remarks of the Senators who spoke that day was the spirit of friendship and dedicated endeavor that Johnson had brought to the work of the Senate. It was this spirit which Clements pledged himself to maintain to the best of his ability. In that endeavor Minority Leader Knowland gave assurance he would cooperate fully.

Democrats like Chavez, Symington, Ellender, Humphrey, Mansfield, Hill, Gore and Monroney were joined by such Republicans as Karl E. Mundt of South Dakota, Margaret Chase Smith of Maine and Thomas K. Kuechel of California in praising both the leadership ability and the personal qualities of the man who had loomed so large in the Senate during that session. The sometimes vitriolic Wayne Morse spoke movingly of Johnson's unselfishness and of his personal debt to the fallen leader. "During the past year, I have been the beneficiary of one kindness after another from Lyndon Johnson," Morse said with emotion. "I consider him not only a great statesman, but a good man."

There was nothing formalized about the tributes. They were spontaneous expressions coming from the hearts of those who gave voice to them.

More than one Senator stated his agreement with Alben Barkley's thought: "I believe the greatest tribute all of us can pay to him in the Senate is to cooperate in carrying forward the necessary business of the Senate for the remainder of this session, and not to allow it to lag in any way."

That was spoken out of a deep understanding of Johnson and his feeling about the work of the Senate.

It was not surprising that the Senators, who worked with Johnson and saw him in action every day, realized that in him they had a leader who deserved tremendous respect. What *was* somewhat surprising, however, even to those who knew the Texan best, was the evidence which accumulated rapidly that the value of his leadership was recognized throughout the nation.

This was first shown in the flood of newspaper editorial comment that came in the days following his heart attack. At times it seemed to Johnson's office staff, as they opened the incoming mail, that every newspaper editor in the country had been keeping an eye on the Democratic leader's work and was now determined that his readers should share in their knowledge of that work and the man who had done it.

There were hundreds of editorials. They appeared in newspapers in every state and in Canadian and English publications. Taken as a whole, they provided incontrovertible proof that Johnson's policy of "unity—moderation—cooperation" was more deeply representative of popular sentiment in the United States than even he could have guessed.

A "composite" editorial, made up of one sentence from each of a score of editorials appearing in representative American newspapers, follows:

"Lyndon Johnson, Majority Leader in the Senate, has proved to be one of the born leaders. (Canton, Ohio, *Repository*.) The 46-year-old Texan has distinguished himself as an astute and conscientious composer of dif-



ferences not only between a Democratic Congress and a Republican Executive but also among factions of Democrats. (*Portland Oregonian*.) In the Majority Leadership he has revealed authentic genius. (*Louisville Times*.)

“The leadership provided by Senator Johnson in a Democratic-controlled, though closely divided, Senate in the midst of a Republican Administration has been notable for the smoothness of its functioning, the absence of caviling and obstructionist tactics and the harmony which has been induced within his own traditionally wide-split party. (Columbus, Ohio, *State Journal*.) He made an outstanding record in welding party unity among liberal and conservative Democrats. (*Labor*, Washington, D.C.)

“The Johnsonian leadership has been almost matchless in terms of tactical skill and in giving the Democrats a new unity on almost every occasion. (*The New York Times*.) Mr. Johnson has won the respect of legislators in both parties as a capable and devoted officer of Congress. (New York *Herald Tribune*.) One of the ablest members of either branch, the Texan is largely responsible for the dispatch with which the Eighty-fourth Congress has been doing its work. (St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*.) He pushed through needed legislation in the interest of the nation rather than of any one party. (Stamford, Connecticut, *Advocate*.)

“Lyndon Johnson has been the leader—one might say—of the Republican as well as of his own party. (New York *Mirror*.) In matters of legislation, he has been more the President than Eisenhower. (St. Petersburg, Florida, *Times*.) He has become one of the most influential men in the political life of the nation. (Dallas *News*.)

“If the country is now traveling on a course of pleasant waters approximating an era of good feeling, a very considerable share of the credit belongs to Senator Johnson. (Providence *Bulletin*.) By tact, good will and level-headedness, he has managed to work with the Republican President and to make a good record for his Party, too. (Washington *Star*.)

“Serving in what is undoubtedly the most exacting role on Capitol Hill, he has shown a parliamentary brilliance and a talent both for composing intraparty differences and for expediting the business of the Senate that has rarely been matched in recent years. (Buffalo *News*.) The first session of the Democratic-controlled Eighty-fourth Congress was really Johnson’s session. (*Life* magazine.)

“The nation needs Lyndon Johnson. (Amarillo, Texas, *News*.) He has the makings of a statesman. (Greenville, South Carolina, *Piedmont*.) A nation which needs his kind of leadership in its legislative halls will hope that the strength of heart he has shown in the political arena will serve to pull him through this greatest crisis in his life and restore him to full vigor. (Beaumont, Texas, *Enterprise*.)

“We join with the President and the Senate in wishing Senator Johnson a prompt and complete recovery. (Phoenix, Arizona, *Republic*.)”

The Senators respected Johnson’s ability and liked him personally. The newspaper editors approved of his policies and admired the way he put those policies into effect.

The people, it turned out, just plain loved Lyndon Johnson.

Within hours after the first announcement was made of Johnson's heart attack, messages for him began to flood the hospital. They came at first by telephone and telegraph and then, after a couple of days, also by mail. They came not only from longtime friends and Texas political supporters but also from figures high in the government and business worlds and from other people of whom Johnson had never heard and who he would have said could never have heard of him.

"Get well," the messages said. "The nation needs you."

"I had a heart attack myself years ago," many of them said. "You can be good as new if you will do thus and so."

"We read in the newspapers how you work for the whole country," they said. "That's what we want. You get well and keep it up."

"We are praying for you," said thousands of messages.

Anxious telephone calls were followed by letters from the President and all members of his Cabinet, the Vice-President, nearly every Senator and many members of the House of Representatives, governors and ambassadors. Bernard Baruch sent his good wishes, and so did Audie Murphy and Walter Winchell and Adlai Stevenson and Jimmy Byrnes, Herbert Bayard Swope, Governor Averell Harriman of New York and Governor Allan Shivers of Texas.

And the president of Wiley College for Negroes in Marshall, Texas, near the community where Lady Bird was brought up, wrote that the students there were praying for Johnson's recovery.

Clare Boothe Luce, Ambassador to Italy and a former colleague of Johnson in the House of Representatives, sent two messages to express her concern.

An elderly lady, an old-age pensioner who described herself as among the many who had been helped by Johnson's efforts in Congress, enclosed a dollar bill with her letter. She said she knew how much it could mean to receive a dollar unexpectedly in the mail and she thought perhaps the money would buy something he wanted for his hospital room.

General Lucius Clay, who had been largely responsible for the content of the Eisenhower highway bill which Johnson had so roundly trounced in the Senate a little while before, wrote several pages in longhand to express his admiration for the man from Texas.

A letter from a group of Catholic Sisters told Johnson that he had been adopted as their personal Senator, with daily prayers being said for him.

A German lawyer wrote—in German—that he had once suffered a heart attack, knew how to expedite recovery, and was willing to come to the United States at his own expense to pass on his knowledge “because of what you, as a leader in your country, have done for my country.”

An Indiana farmer and his wife sent a different greeting card every day for three weeks, each bearing a handwritten verse of comforting and applicable Scripture.

The typed and penciled letters, the post cards, the “Get well” greeting cards and the gifts—books, flowers, special foods, a tiny radio set, a handmade “prayer handkerchief,” and dozens of other items—came from all

sections of the country and from virtually every state. They came from all kinds of people, rich, poor, and in-between: housewives, farmers, corporation presidents, laborers, bankers, old-age pensioners, clubwomen.

Johnson had developed into a popular national figure without realizing it. His heart attack had come at the precise time that the country was learning of his outstanding job as Majority Leader, and of the policies which were enabling him to do that kind of job. With the newspapers and radio and television now pouring out an endless fountain of information about him, the people learned more and liked what they learned.

One of the Washington newspaper writers headed a column, "Everybody Loves Lyndon." That seemed to sum up the situation fairly enough.

# XIII

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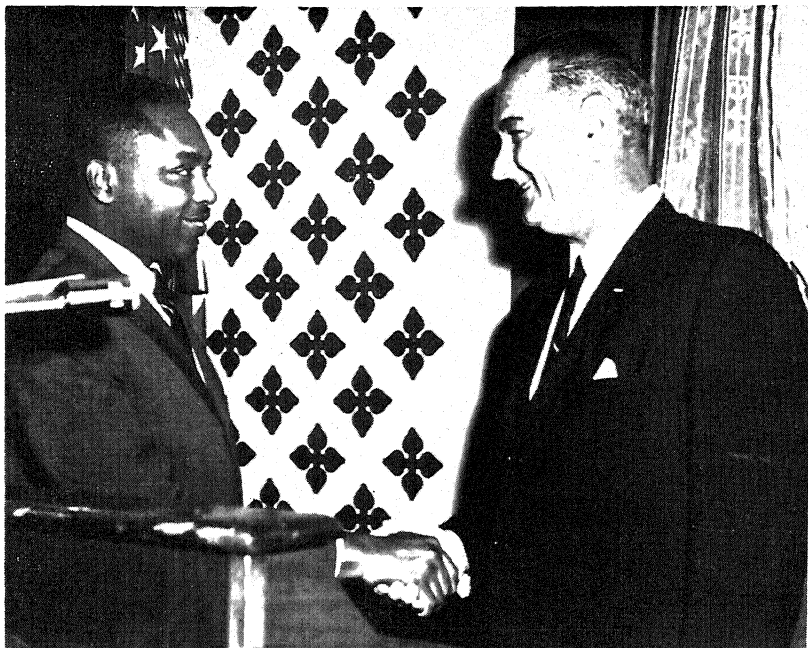
Within two weeks from the time he entered the hospital, Johnson had his recovery effort organized like one of his political campaigns and, characteristically, was giving it all he had.

He did everything the doctors told him to do, adhering to his long-established policy of obtaining the best advice possible and then following it. That policy had paid off in politics. He had no doubt it would work as well in this fight for life and health. In fact, he was soon trying to go the doctors one better. He added a few trimmings of his own to the regimen they ordered for him.

Once a fervent steak and French-fried potatoes man, his daily intake of calories was now limited by the doctors to fifteen hundred—and by himself to twelve hundred. The doctors wanted him to reduce his weight from two hundred to a hundred and eighty-five pounds. He announced his own determination to cut the figure ten pounds below that goal.

Once a chain smoker, he now gave up cigarettes completely. But he kept a package on a bedside table at all times as a means of testing himself.

Once inclined to flare up in quickly passing irritation over trifles, he now refused to become disturbed if things



Vice President Johnson welcomes Hobart Taylor, Executive Director of the Committee on Equal Employment Opportunities. Johnson was chairman of the committee.



The Vice President meets Great Britain's Princess Margaret in Jamaica during ceremonies marking that nation's independence.



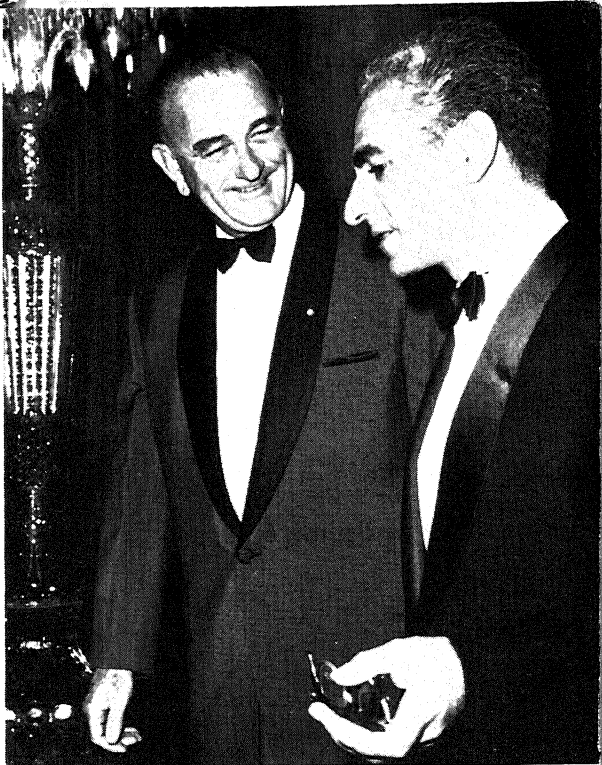
The Vice President at home with children and with crowds during a trip to India in 1961.



Johnson was received in a private audience with the late Pope John XXIII on September 7, 1962.



With the Shah of Iran, to whose country the Vice President journeyed in August, 1962.



Bashir Ahmed, the camel driver, shakes hands with Johnson in Pakistan. He later visited the LBJ ranch after the Vice President invited him to "come over" some time.





The Vice President and Mayor Willy Brandt (on Johnson's left) as they walked near the East German border in Berlin.



Johnson met with the ambassadors of the Organization of American States at his ranch in October, 1962, during the Cuban crisis.

went a little wrong. He suffered two periods of the deepest depression during the early stages of his recovery, but they passed as he gained ground in the battle—and everything was always a battle for Johnson—to achieve greater serenity of spirit.

He even took long naps each afternoon, a development which anyone who knew him would have taken oath was impossible.

He had help. Lady Bird had moved into the hospital the night her husband was brought there, and she stayed until he was discharged five weeks later. She was given a room next to him. For the first few critical days there was never a time when she was more than a few feet away from him.

“Every time I lifted my hand,” Johnson later recalled gratefully, “she would be there.”

She took charge of his diet, figuring it out calorie by calorie, with full regard to nutritive value and vitamins. As Johnson began to improve, he was allowed a few carefully rationed visitors, and Lady Bird again did the rationing. She read to her husband the thousands of encouraging messages that poured in. She answered them all, dictating letters for a couple of hours before her patient woke up in the morning and signing letters for a couple of hours after he went to sleep at night.

Through it all she remained calm, cheerful and outwardly serene. She never lost patience. Only once, in a casual comment to her husband, did she reveal the strain she was under. “When this is over,” she said quietly, “I want to go off by myself and cry for about two hours.”

Close friends of the Johnsons had always maintained

that Lady Bird was as remarkable in her way as Lyndon was in his. If any proof of that were needed, Lady Bird furnished it during this time. It was a period in which the pleasant Southern woman showed the kind of tempered steel that lay beneath the velvet exterior of her personality.

Johnson's mother also was on the scene during the early stages of his fight back from the heart attack. The redoubtable Rebekah Baines Johnson, now seventy-four years old, brought the valuable assets of her orderly mind and calm common sense to the atmosphere surrounding the stricken man. She charmed newspaper reporters and other callers with her stories of Johnson's boyhood, and she never wavered in her confidence that he would recover to fill the role she felt destiny still had in store for him.

His two daughters were around, too, and they brought him great comfort. Many friends came, once visitors were permitted. One of the most frequent callers was Representative Homer Thornberry, who had succeeded to Johnson's congressional seat. He was a very close friend and a longtime opponent in an endless and completely vicious series of domino games. Thornberry told Lady Bird he knew the Senator was on the upgrade when he started crowing with his oldtime lustiness over winning a game.

Johnson was able to make jokes, a little on the grim side, about his plight. Some twelve or fourteen days after his attack Lady Bird came to his hospital room one afternoon to report that a tailor, who had been engaged to

make two suits for Johnson, had called up to ask what he should do about them.

"Tell him to go ahead with the blue suit," Johnson instructed. "We can use that one no matter what happens."

As he continued to improve, the visits with family and friends, the domino games and the reading proved insufficient. Two secretaries were moved out to the hospital from the senatorial office, bringing along their typewriters and their ability to remain unruffled by telephones that never stopped ringing. Walter Jenkins, Johnson's faithful and capable "chief of staff" who had never worked for anybody else in his life, showed up two or three times daily with mail from the office and news of Senate activities. Sam Houston Johnson dug deeply into his knowledge of his brother to find ways of pleasing him and keeping him in good spirits.

The entire seventeenth floor of the hospital came to be occupied by the Johnson entourage. Hospital attachés frankly had never seen anything like it at Bethesda Naval: people coming and going, telephones ringing, typewriters rattling, and a general air of productive confusion prevailing.

All this activity was sufficiently far removed from Johnson's own room not to disturb him. But he was fully aware of the activity and was, in fact, pretty much in control of it. This was a campaign and he was running his own campaign, even though by remote control. He made steady progress and the doctors found him a most cooperative patient.

The Senate was still in session and, although Johnson

was not permitted by the doctors even to talk about legislative business, he read the *Congressional Record* every day and kept fully informed about what was going on. "Remember," he told his doctor, "my diet has always included a big helping of politics. I can't help it if I must have politics on the menu every day."

President Eisenhower paid him a visit before leaving for the Geneva Conference and touched Johnson deeply by saying to him and Lady Bird, "My heart will be here with you." Vice-President Nixon came out for a talk. Sam Rayburn, having sternly waited the two weeks the doctors originally had said should elapse before Johnson had visitors outside his family, showed up to urge with fond irascibility that the patient keep in mind that he was supposed to take things easy. Senators from both parties came to the hospital, and Cabinet members and Supreme Court justices and old friends from Texas.

The expressions of concern and encouragement Johnson received from so many people were a factor of great importance in his struggle toward recovery. In a statement he gave *Roll Call*, the newspaper for Capitol Hill employees, the day after he was discharged from the hospital, he tried to tell what those messages had meant to him :

"It is trite, I suppose, to say there are a lot of good people in the world. But that is the thought which came to me over and over as I lay in my bed in Bethesda Naval Hospital fighting back toward recovery.

"In those first difficult days I was helped immeasurably by the knowledge that so many people were pulling for me and praying that I would get well. . . .

“Lady Bird, my wife, read all the comforting messages to me right from the first. I will never be able to express adequately what they did for me. I could literally feel myself gaining courage and strength from them.

“When I was discharged from the hospital, the attending physicians stated I had responded favorably to every treatment given me. Much of the credit for that circumstance belongs to the people who wired and wrote me, who left word that they were thinking of me, who sent me thousands of cheerful ‘Get well’ cards.

“I had always considered myself a man with an adequate appreciation of the innate goodness of humanity. I know now my appreciation was not strong enough.

“I will try earnestly never again to underestimate the kindness and warm humanity of the American people. I will never be without a feeling of thankfulness in my heart for the way they demonstrated these inspiring traits at a time when the demonstration meant so much to me.

“My friends, known and unknown to me, sustained me when my need was great beyond description. That is why I know I am speaking the literal truth when I say, ‘This is a world full of good people.’ ”

Visitors to the hospital and later to Johnson’s Washington home, and still later to his ranch in Texas, found that he was indeed, in certain significant respects, a changed man.

“I’ve thrown away the whip,” he told one friend. “That heart attack taught me to appreciate some things that a busy man sometimes almost forgets. I’ve found out it’s fun to play dominoes with my two girls. I’ve

found out again that it's pleasant to make small talk with my wife and neighbors. Essentially, it all means, I guess, that I'm learning all over how to live."

There were even deeper aspects to the change. In his rush up the political ladder, the man from Texas had never had time—or had never taken time—for serious reading and reflective thinking. He said himself that he doubted if he had read six books all the way through since leaving college. His compelling concern was always with the *now*, never with the *then*. He gained his knowledge of current issues from newspaper headlines and from memos prepared by persons whose judgment he trusted.

He had been in a mad hurry all his life. There had never been a time when he indulged in the luxury of philosophizing. In politics—and there had been little else than politics in his adult life—he acted on the basis of an instinct that very rarely led him astray. He had felt no particular need for developing a solid political philosophy, based on a well-rounded knowledge of the past as well as a keen awareness of the present.

Now, after a quarter century of hustle, bustle and rustle, Johnson was able to lean back, read, think, and arrive at conclusions that could be theoretical as well as practical in nature. The enforced leisure of his convalescence challenged him to give thought to the future of man, not just to man's daily needs.

Thus it was that people who came to see him found a Johnson who was a more reflective, more poised, quieter man than the one they had known, a Johnson who was reading Plato and early American history as well as *The New York Times* and the *Congressional Record*, a John-



son, in short, who was learning from this experience just as he had learned from every other experience of his life.

High-ranking members of the Democratic Party came in a steady stream to visit him on his Texas ranch in that fall of 1955. There was much speculation among political writers for the newspapers as to the extent to which Johnson was shaping the party's policy. He himself disclaimed any such intention. But there was no question that in his let-us-reason-together fashion he was getting over the essence of his thinking about the course the Democrats should follow.

He was the right man to do the job. As the highly respected Roscoe Drummond wrote in the *New York Herald Tribune*, "Senator Johnson's voice in Democratic matters would not be heeded the way it is now being heeded if he were primarily serving his own personal ambitions."

During all this time Johnson was applying the moderate approach to his personal life as well as advocating it as a policy of the Democratic Party. He made that clear to a friend who, commenting on the flow of newspaper stories about Johnson's important visitors, wondered if he was trying to do too much.

"No," Johnson said firmly. "The reporters tell about the visits of Adlai Stevenson, the Speaker, Bob Kerr, Hubert Humphrey and all the others. But what they don't write about is the nap I take every afternoon or how I spend my evenings quietly with Lady Bird and the girls."

He took great delight in coming really to know Lynda Bird and Lucy Baines, who were now eleven and eight years old. Johnson was charmed by their childishly seri-

ous talk of their friends, their plans for the coming school year in Washington, their pleasure in his company.

“It’s funny how little things can mean so much to a man who’s getting well from a serious illness,” Johnson said afterward. “I learned things from those two girls in the fall of 1955 that I would never in the world have found out from anybody else.

“Why, I even learned something from our dog, Little Beagle.

“One day I was sitting out on the porch, alone and feeling rather low in my mind. I didn’t say anything or do anything except maybe sort of sigh to attract Little Beagle’s attention. But he suddenly got up from where he was sitting and came over to me. He put his head in my lap and just stood there, looking at me with his big eyes. ‘All right, Little Beagle,’ I said, ‘we’ll go on from here and take it as it comes.’ I don’t know why that should have caused me to feel better all at once, but it did.”

Among the visitors were many who had nothing to do with politics. One weekend, Arthur Godfrey, a warm admirer of the Senator from Texas, gathered up a plane-load of friends and flew them down to the LBJ Ranch. Newspaper people from Washington and various Texas cities dropped in to visit. His sisters and their families were around, and so was his brother, Sam Houston. A. W. Moursund, Johnson City attorney and close friend, came in often for a game of dominoes.

In spite of the comings and goings of visitors, Johnson was, for him, taking life very easily indeed. His ranch on the banks of the Pedernales River was the ideal place

for a man completing his recovery from a heart attack. The rolling land was quiet and peaceful. He saw only those persons he wanted to see, with Lady Bird fending off business calls from constituents.

For the most part his life was one of rigid routine, involving walks over the ranch in the morning, a nap every afternoon, and a great deal of lounging around in a hammock reading or listening to music from a record player.

He was still working hard at the job of getting well. "If this is a political campaign, I'll be coming up to election day in December," he said. "This is one I have to win."

In December he underwent an exhaustive series of examinations. After their conclusion the six doctors who had treated him issued a joint statement regarding his condition. The doctors were J. Willis Hurst of Emory University at Atlanta, Georgia, a specialist who had been on active duty as a Naval Reserve officer at Bethesda when Johnson was a patient there; Howard Burchell and James C. Cain of the Mayo Clinic; Olin Grover of the Scott & White Clinic at Temple, Texas; R. W. Gifford of the National Capitol Physicians' staff, and J. B. Whaley of Johnson City.

Their statement follows:

"It has been approximately six months since Senator Lyndon B. Johnson's heart attack on July 2. We have examined Senator Johnson carefully and are in joint agreement on the following conclusions:

"(1) We are very pleased with the rapid rate of his recovery. There have been no complications and his reaction to gradually increasing activity has been favorable.

His blood pressure is normal; his heart size is normal; and his electrocardiogram is that of a normal man.

“(2) Barring unforeseen complications, there is every reason for him to return to his duties and to resume major activity.

“(3) Senator Johnson, his family, his staff and his intimate friends have been advised fully of the conditions under which he can operate. These are relief from any work that can be handled just as well by his staff; carefully regulated hours of work and rest; and a frequent number of short vacations throughout the year.

“(4) Senator Johnson is generally in very good condition and fully capable of handling his duties. The sensible precautions that we have outlined for him are based upon recognition of the fact that anyone in a responsible position involving mental strain or tension should guard his health carefully.”

That was that.

Johnson was very happy about this official green light signal to resume his work in the 1956 session of Congress. Happy but not surprised. In his own mind, he felt he had known it all along.

He was prepared to observe the limitations the doctors had urged upon his activities. But he was the Majority Leader and he knew that leadership could not be delegated. He was as ready as ever to accept its responsibilities.

The Senator from Texas was still the effective leader of the majority in the United States Senate.

# XIV

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For six of his eight years as Floor Leader for the Democrats, Johnson lived with the reality of a divided government. A Republican President occupied the White House, but his party controlled Congress during only the first two years of his Administration. If the government was going to move, it had to be up to the Democrats to make it move. Johnson was the right man to see to that.

Much of the legislation was controversial, and the fast-talking, fast-moving Majority Leader saw his big job as being to win approval of it without arousing anger. He was the right man for that, too.

The field of civil rights was, of course, the most controversial of all, and there were those who doubted that a native of the state of Texas would do anything effective in this area. But they did not know their man or his record.

Only a few weeks after he first assumed his Senate seat, Johnson had said in a speech on the floor:

“For those who would seek to keep any group in our nation in bondage I have no sympathy or tolerance. Some may feel moved to deny this group or that the homes, the education, the employment which every American has the right to expect, but I am not one of those. My faith

in my fellow man is too great to permit me to waste away my life burning with hatred against any group. I believe, and I believe sincerely, that we have a system of representative government that is strong enough, flexible enough, to permit all groups to work together toward a better life."

As Majority Leader, he lived up to the sentiments he had expressed when he was a freshman Senator. He spearheaded the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1957. It was the first civil rights legislation to be enacted in eighty-two years. He was equally successful in getting congressional approval for the Civil Rights Act of 1960, which established a new registration procedure designed to insure Negroes the right to vote.

Each of these bills encountered considerable opposition on the floor of the Senate, much of it from the powerful Southern leaders who usually "went along with Lyndon" on other matters. Johnson was prouder perhaps of his success with these two bills than of anything else in the giant mountain of accomplishment he built during the time that he led the Senate.

An article by David Demarest Lloyd in *Reporter* magazine called passage of the 1958 bill "a man-made miracle" and saw Johnson as "one of the most remarkable congressional leaders of our time." Lloyd added: "His very success as the master of compromise and coalition in the Senate has obscured public recognition of his gifts of intellect and personality. He dominates his fellows not only through his superior horsetrading sense but also by forceful clarity of vision and a breadth and quickness of mind."

Johnson also threw his support behind a constitutional amendment abolishing the poll tax as a prerequisite to voting in a national election. He helped to bring about the admission of Alaska and Hawaii to the United States.

His advocacy of legislation designed to protect human rights was no surprise to those who knew something of his activities in Texas on behalf of minority groups. His "various acts of compassion," remarked *Look* magazine in 1959, had won him "most of the Mexican, Negro, Jewish, Polish, Czech, German and Italian votes in Texas—all sizable minorities."

He was exceedingly active in pushing for better educational opportunities for American youth. He saw the classroom, not the battlefield foxhole or trench, as the frontier of freedom. "I know of nothing," he said in a speech in the Senate in 1958, "which has higher priority than the education of our children and their preparation for the needs of the modern world." Feeling that way, it was natural that he should lead the fight for aid-to-education legislation in 1958 and 1960. The thoughtful columnist, Marquis Childs, commented, "His brilliance as a leader was never better demonstrated than in the passage of the school aid bill."

Johnson, the leader, literally led the United States into the Space Age.

When Soviet Russia sent Sputnik whirling into space in the fall of 1957, Johnson's Preparedness Subcommittee immediately launched a searching investigation to find out why the United States was lagging behind. Upon completion of its investigation, the subcommittee urgently recommended that the Strategic Air Force be

modernized and strengthened, that ground and naval forces also be modernized and strengthened, that production of ballistic missiles be stepped up, and that work be started at once on development of a rocket motor with a thrust of one million pounds.

That was the military side of the space effort. There was another side as well.

Johnson called for and brought about the formation of a special Senate committee to conduct a further study of all aspects and problems relating to the exploration of outer space. He was its chairman. Later, at his urging, the permanent Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee was established, and it was headed by Johnson as long as he remained in the Senate.

The Majority Leader early gave heavy emphasis to the importance of international cooperation in the use and exploration of space. At the request of the President and Secretary of State, he presented the American position on the subject in an appearance at the United Nations in New York. The New York *Herald Tribune* editorially congratulated Johnson for his "forceful affirmation" of U.S. policy, saying his "eloquent performance undoubtedly made a deep impression on the uncommitted nations."

Johnson long had been keenly and soberly aware that there was no way for the United States to live alone in the world. "There are times in the lives of nations, as in the lives of men, when they must stop running away from themselves and their world," he declared. "Such a time has come for Americans." He devoted intensive study to the relations between the United States and



other countries. He was, naturally, an active participant in formulating foreign policy through congressional action. He showed himself highly skillful in the art of personal diplomacy, and no wonder, since that was an art he practiced every day on the floor and in the cloak-rooms of the Senate.

Many leaders of foreign countries visited Washington during the years that Johnson was Majority Leader. He was frequently called to the White House to join in conferring with these leaders—such men as Chancellor Konrad Adenauer of Germany, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion of Israel, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan of Great Britain, and Sir Winston Churchill.

Johnson also carried his interest in other countries into a personal friendship with the President of Mexico, whom he visited in Mexico at the personal request of President Eisenhower, and later entertained at his ranch in Texas.

The Majority Leader conceived and pushed to adoption legislation to establish an East-West Center at the University of Hawaii to train students from Asian countries.

Another example of his leadership in foreign affairs was his "open curtain" proposal, made following Nikita Khrushchev's appearance on American television. This was a clear and forceful challenge to the Communists to open the Iron Curtain and permit the free exchange of ideas between the two nations. Hailed in the *Christian Science Monitor* as "a Jeffersonian breath of fearless mental freedom," and "an eloquent plea for imagination in foreign policy," the proposal helped to set the stage for the U.S.-Russian exchange agreement announced a few months later.

Johnson had always been a strong supporter of the reciprocal trade program, initiated by Cordell Hull back in the 'thirties. He led the successful drive in 1958 to extend the Reciprocal Trade Act for a longer period than ever before. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, in her syndicated newspaper column, commented, "I think we all owe congratulations to Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson and his colleagues for their great understanding of the real need for reciprocal foreign trade agreements."

Having grown up in the not-quite-poverty status that was the heritage of many Americans born during the first one-fifth of this century, Johnson was deeply involved in his mature years with legislation to advance the welfare of individual human beings. "A responsible nation," he declared, "balances the security of its people first and makes the budget balance with that."

Thus, in pushing for enactment of a full employment law, he told the AFL-CIO Unemployment Congress in Washington in the spring of 1959:

"There are those who think that the only approach to unemployment should be the approach of charity. There are others who even toy with the idea that a certain amount of unemployment is 'healthy' and 'normal.' A healthy, normal, stable country is one that makes fullest use of the productive capacity of its citizens. A stable and prosperous country is one in which working men and women are on payrolls—not on relief rolls."

Sam Rayburn once said, "It is difficult for a leader to know just how he does lead," but numerous observers of the Senate at least thought they knew some of the secrets of Johnson's leadership. Although he was skilled in the

parliamentary maneuvering that could be so valuable on the floor, his most effective work was done in the cloak-rooms or in his private office. He was a master of the personal approach. "Being won over by Johnson," Mary McGrory of the *Washington Star* once wrote, "is a rather overwhelming experience."

"The full treatment," Miss McGrory continued, "is an incredibly potent mixture of persuasion, badgering, flattery, threats, reminders of past favors and future advantages. It accounts for Johnson's enormous effectiveness in a small room with a small group."

There was somewhat more to it than that, of course. When Johnson approached another Senator to talk about a legislative measure, he was armed with the pertinent facts. He was not one to neglect his homework on either issues or personalities. All his life he had been learning by asking questions and then listening, really listening, to the answers. When he had all the facts, he threw the full weight of his compelling personality into presenting them to others.

Press, radio and television representatives on Capitol Hill told the country day after day that the Senate had the hardest-working Majority Leader in its history. Gould Lincoln, veteran Washington political writer, headed one of his columns, LYNDON JOHNSON MOVES MOUNTAINS. Another Washington columnist, Doris Flee-son, who as often as not was severely critical of Johnson, nevertheless wrote after one exhibition of his leadership that the only thing left to him was to set his next triumph in the Senate to music.

Johnson was sometimes vexed by the spate of news-

paper stories and editorials that, even while admiring his handiwork, presented him as nothing more than the proprietor of a legislative gristmill operating at high speed, a cold and inhuman figure who lacked the capacity to enjoy the activities that brought pleasure to normal men.

"People say I don't know how to relax," he once complained. "They just don't understand. I used to go out to Burning Tree and play golf once in a while. I liked it, too. But what these people don't realize is that the business I'm supposed to do for the country would suffer if I spent my time on the golf links."

He took his work with deadly seriousness, no doubt about that. Even the most conscientious members of the United States Senate, with very few exceptions, take some time off to enjoy the social whirl. Johnson had never done much "socializing," to use his rather scornful term. As Majority Leader he did virtually none.

One midnight he arrived home dog-tired from a late session of the Senate. His wife had just come in from a dance. She gave a glowing report of the evening's pleasures.

"I don't see why you can't take some time off for fun, Lyndon," she expostulated. "All the other Senators do. Why, Senator Green, who is so much older than you, was there and having a fine time. I danced with him twice."

"Senator Green!" Her husband exploded into laughter. "It was passing his pet bill through the Senate that kept me at work so late tonight."

He was well aware that if it had not been this particular bill it would have been something else.

"Senator Johnson is neither young nor old," wrote his

friend William S. White in *The New York Times Magazine*, "but only a furiously functioning one-man political caucus to whom age, health and many other normal concerns have an absolute and total irrelevance that must be seen to be credited."

But health concerns had not been actually irrelevant to Johnson after the 1955 heart attack. The full recovery that had been predicted for him by the group of doctors had become a reality. He had gone back to overworking, but he still watched his diet and he had never returned to cigarettes. He carried his latest electrocardiogram around with him to display to friends and proudly told that he had been able to buy a life insurance policy without paying an extra premium.

His health was important. For, as the national election year of 1960 approached, increasing signs appeared that the Majority Leader of the Senate would be a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President.

Johnson had a solid core of support and it was not confined to the South. As *The New York Times* pointed out editorially, "Even his political opponents concede that he is not a segregationist, that he is not a poor health risk, that he would not favor the Texas oil interests if he were President, and that in the context of world politics, his gifts as a negotiator with Khrushchev, Macmillan and de Gaulle would serve him perhaps better than those of any other candidate." And the *Washington Star* sounded the same note in saying, "That he would be a strong and effective Chief Executive, once in the White House, is generally admitted, even by some of those who oppose the Texan." John F. Kennedy told a newspaper columnist

that he considered himself as well qualified to be President as any of the other candidates—"except," he added, "Lyndon."

But Johnson had business to attend to in Washington. He was well aware that, since his candidacy must be based on his brilliant record as Senate Majority Leader, he could hardly leave the duties of that post during a busy session of Congress in order to get out over the country and campaign for support at the forthcoming National Democratic Convention. So, for the most part, he stayed on the job in Washington.

Friends, led by Sam Rayburn and John Connally (later, in 1963, the Texas Governor who was in the car with President Kennedy when he was assassinated and who was himself seriously wounded by the assassin), opened headquarters for the Citizens-for-Johnson Committee in Washington on June 2, 1960. But Johnson himself did not even announce until July 5 that he would allow his name to go before the convention. He had entered no primaries.

At the convention, he did make a hard drive for delegates, visiting delegation caucuses to present his case, receiving top political figures in his hotel suite to ask their support, and finally engaging in a nationally televised "debate" with John F. Kennedy, long regarded as the front-runner.

When Kennedy won the nomination on the first ballot, the Texan telegraphed his congratulations to the nominee and issued a statement pledging his active support to the Democratic ticket in the campaign to come.

# XV

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The story of how Lyndon Johnson came to be chosen in 1960 as the Democratic nominee for Vice President has been told many times and in many widely differing versions. It was the subject of bemused speculation by television commentators beginning minutes after the choice was made known. Newspaper reporters covering the Los Angeles convention and editorial writers back home added their thoughts on the matter as quickly as they could rush into print, and the news magazines followed along. Two books, *The Making of the President: 1960*, by Theodore H. White, and *Mr. Sam*, a biography of Sam Rayburn by C. Dwight Dorough, offered accounts of the events leading up to the nomination, accounts that were not in agreement in all particulars.

Basically, the answer to the question of why Johnson was nominated was starkly simple: John Fitzgerald Kennedy, having secured the nomination for President, wanted Lyndon Baines Johnson on the ticket with him, and Johnson, when appealed to on the basis of the good of the Democratic Party, consented to become the candidate for Vice President.

Behind that basic simplicity, admittedly, were some factors of considerably greater complexity.

Some of the political commentators were upset and even angry because they had interpreted Johnson's repeated expressions of indifference regarding the vice presidency as amounting to a definite statement that he would never accept second place. He had made no such statement. It would have been out of character for this dedicated Democrat to say in advance that he would refuse any party assignment that might be given him.

As for the presidential nominee, he was on record, at least in private, as calling Johnson the ablest man in American politics. "He really cares about this country as I want a President to care," he told Columnist Joseph Alsop.

At the time, there was much talk about the vast differences between the two men. And, of course, tremendous outward differences clearly did exist. The man from Boston, born to wealth, well-educated, highly articulate, widely read and himself a writer of ability, an intellectual and a master of the dry quip and the literary allusion, seemed far, far removed from the strapping "man's man" Texan, born in a farmhouse, graduate of a state teachers' college, a man whose reading consisted mostly of newspapers and memos from staff aides and advisers, a man emotional and unsophisticated, who spoke without reticence of his need to get among masses of people and "to press the flesh" in hearty handshakes.

Observers who stressed these and other differences forgot that Kennedy and Johnson also had traits, and more important traits, in common. They were both experienced and practical politicians and, as such, both were tough, determined, proud individualists who understood the na-



ture of power and the uses to which it could be put to advance the welfare of the country. And both were men of tremendous complexity, which may well have been a factor in their understanding of each other.

In any case, the morning after he had been triumphantly nominated for President by the Democratic delegates, Kennedy offered Johnson the vice presidential nomination. Some of his aides and supporters were aghast, but this was one of the many matters upon which the nominee made up his own mind.

In fact, the thought of Johnson as a running mate was not new to him. Before his own nomination, in fact on the Sunday before the convention opened, Kennedy had casually wondered aloud to the late Philip Graham, publisher of the *Washington Post*, whether Johnson would accept the second-place nomination if it were offered to him. Graham was a trusted friend of Johnson's and he passed on the remark. Johnson, still running hard for the nomination, gave no indication that he would be receptive to anything of the kind.

But Kennedy wanted Johnson on the ticket. He could count electoral votes as well as anyone else, better than most, and his count showed him that he needed assurance that he could carry the South in the November election. The best assurance obviously would be to have Johnson, who also had much support outside of the Southern states, on the ticket with him.

Besides, Kennedy, with his sense of history and his dispassionate way of considering future possibilities, had something else in mind. The Vice President should be a man who possessed presidential capabilities. As Kennedy

told Joseph Alsop, "You've just got to think about what might happen."

Prior to the presidential nominee's early-morning telephone call on the day after his night of triumph, there is no evidence that Johnson was thinking about the vice presidential spot. The moment after Kennedy's nomination became certain, the Senator turned to his wife, with whom he was watching the convention on television, and said, "That's that. Tomorrow we can take the girls and do something we want to do—go to Disneyland, maybe."

But things did not turn out that way.

Johnson has given his own account of what happened. In a March 26, 1963, interview on a television network, TV reporter William Lawrence asked bluntly, "Mr. Vice President, how did you happen to run for the vice presidency?"

The Vice President replied:

"After I was defeated for the presidency at Los Angeles, I got my first good night's sleep in several weeks, and the next morning the nominee for President, Mr. Kennedy, called me and we had a meeting, and he asked me to go on the ticket.

"I considered it, talked to many of my friends, recognized that there were only two offices in the land in which all the people had a choice. And I felt that it offered a good opportunity, that it would be quite a challenge, that it would be good for the party and the country; and I expressed my willingness to accept the nomination, and the convention nominated me."

Sam Rayburn and others of Johnson's friends at first opposed his accepting the nomination, just as some of

Kennedy's advisers had opposed his offering it. Kennedy himself, being well aware of Johnson's loyalty to Rayburn, visited the Speaker and urged him to advise acceptance.

According to Dorough, who had Rayburn's full cooperation in the preparation of his book, the Speaker finally replied, "Up until thirty minutes ago I was against it, and I have withheld a final decision until I could really find out what was in your heart. You know, Jack, I am a very old man and sometimes given to being a little selfish, I am sure. I am in the twilight of my life, walking down into the valley. My career is behind me, but Lyndon is only approaching the summit of his. I am afraid I was trying to keep him in the legislative end where he could help me. Now the way you explain it I can see that you need him more. You are looking at the whole."

Shortly thereafter Kennedy reached Johnson by telephone, again urging him to take the nomination, and read to him a draft of a statement announcing his choice. The Texan asked Kennedy if he really—*really*—wanted him. Yes, he really did, Kennedy replied. Johnson then agreed to accept, and it was wrapped up soon after that with formal announcements and press conferences.

In his formal statement endorsing Johnson for Vice President, Kennedy said:

"His long experience dates back to the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. . . . He has earned the endorsement of all fifty states through his vigorous and positive [Senate] leadership.

"I have said many times that in these days of great

challenge, Americans must have a Vice President capable of dealing with the grave problems confronting this nation and the free world. We need men of strength if we are to be strong and if we are to prevail and lead the world on the road to freedom. Lyndon Johnson has demonstrated on many occasions his brilliant qualifications for the leadership we require today.”

Governor David L. Lawrence of Pennsylvania, who had agreed heartily with Kennedy that Johnson was an excellent choice, placed him in nomination for Vice President at the July 14 session of the convention. John W. McCormack of Massachusetts, House Majority Leader, moved to suspend the rules and take a voice vote on the nomination. The vote was taken and the permanent chairman, acting in the role Rayburn had filled at the three previous national conventions, ruled the required two-thirds had voted in the affirmative and that Johnson was nominated by acclamation.

In his acceptance speech, Johnson reviewed the six years of divided government during which he had been Senate Majority Leader. “By great effort, by great patience, by a sense of overriding responsibility to the nation on all things,” he said, “Democrats have made divided government work.” But, he added, divided government must end.

“The front line of divided government has been on the Senate floor,” he continued. “The front line of unified government is on up ahead. In the choice between the uniform to wear or the duty to perform, there is no choice—no responsible choice—but duty. I will serve where my party asks me to serve and where my country-

men want me to serve, and that is why I gave the answer I did yesterday.”

He returned in his speech to his recurrent theme of responsibility:

“We must live, we must work, as responsible men.

“With gentle hands we must minister to the needs of the meek among us—the young, the aged, the sick, the men and women and children of all walks, all stations, of life.

“At the same time, we shield the prize of freedom,” he continued. “We must keep the muscle in the arm of America, and with steady hands and resolute hearts hold back the aggressive forces of evil which challenge us today.

“America must—to those who threaten the peace and freedom of mankind—speak with a decisive voice, speak with one voice, speak again with the voice of a government undivided, of a nation fully united.

“Small powers and great powers alike will challenge our hesitation, move against our uncertainty, attack our disunity. But no power on earth will prevail against a decisive America, confident of its strength, sure of its soul, one in its voice of determination.

“This is the America we must have—and shall have.”

He expressed his gratitude for the confidence the presidential nominee had shown in him.

“Wherever he wants me to go,” he promised, “I will go, for the party, for the nation. I will go because I know we both want America to go up the same road toward greatness.”

He did go, and he went far and wide, during the fall

campaign. This was politicking at the grass roots level, this was getting out among the people—and Johnson loved it.

The Kennedy-Johnson victory was won by the closest popular vote margin of any presidential election in the twentieth century. While Johnson's campaigning was not confined to the South, he did concentrate there and, according to Republican leaders, his efforts played a large part in the defeat of their ticket.

To Johnson's deep satisfaction, his native state, which had gone for Eisenhower in both 1952 and 1956, came back into the Democratic fold. The victory there came against difficult odds, with many major newspapers opposing the Kennedy-Johnson team. But the victory was won nonetheless, and only three Southern states went for the Republicans.

Somewhat incidentally, Johnson also was re-elected to his third term in the United States Senate, the Texas law of that time permitting him to run for both the senatorship and the vice presidency at the same time. He took the oath of office for the Senate term January 3, 1961, and immediately resigned.

He was administered the oath of office as Vice President of the United States by his old friend, Speaker Sam Rayburn, on January 20.

# XVI

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During the campaign leading to his election Johnson had repeatedly emphasized that Kennedy was the leader, had said more than once, "Where he leads I will follow." He took that precise attitude with him into office.

"The President followed me when I was the Senate leader," he would often say. "I am following him now. It is one thing to be the pilot and another thing to be the co-pilot."

Johnson knew there could be only one President, that there was no such office as Assistant President. The President was boss and the Vice President never questioned it. He would not hold news conferences where reporters might be able to jockey him into positions at cross purposes with the President. He insisted that his speeches be officially cleared in order that he would speak only the policy of the Administration.

On his part, the President, who had always held a healthy respect for Johnson's capabilities, took full advantage of the former Senate leader's genius for stating a case with calmness and persuasiveness. He used the Vice President as an Administration spokesman all over the nation. In his less than three years as Vice President, Johnson made nearly four hundred speeches in thirty-

five states and the District of Columbia. He presented the Administration views on a great variety of issues, ranging from civil rights to the Berlin Wall, from communism in Asia to space development, from Federal aid for education to U.S. aid for the emerging nations, and numerous other subjects.

These speeches were not merely exercises in oratory, not an activity someone thought up to give a restlessly energetic man something to do. After all, Johnson was the man who had once said, "If you're in politics and you can't tell when you walk into a room who's for you and who's against you, then you're in the wrong line of work." He was adept at gauging the temper of public opinion, and when he returned from a speech-making tour he immediately gave the President a report. The President used the information thus gained to revise or adjust or strengthen certain programs and policies.

It was not only on domestic affairs that the President called upon Johnson to serve as an emissary and spokesman for the Administration. He became the most-traveled Vice President in history, journeying to thirty-three foreign countries and making more than one hundred and fifty speeches abroad.

His role in foreign affairs began before the Kennedy Administration was three months old. On April 3, 1961, Johnson represented the President at a celebration in Dakar observing the first anniversary of the new Republic of Senegal. If another man had been given this assignment, it might well have turned out to be a stiffly formal gesture of good will. But the Vice President jumped into the midst of crowds of Senegalese, shaking



hands right and left, beaming at elderly women, patting children on the head. He charmed them with his display of personal friendliness.

A few weeks later, the President sent Johnson on a journey to the Far East and South Asia. He discussed economic, social, and military problems with heads of state in Vietnam, the Philippines, the Republic of China, Thailand, India, and Pakistan.

In August of that year, the Communists built the wall separating East and West Berlin. The President promptly asked Johnson to make a weekend visit to Berlin to symbolize American determination to resist Communist pressure.

Reporting on that important visit, Johnson said: "No person can see what we saw without deeply feeling the great responsibilities that America has to the people of West Berlin, and to humanity. They look to us for encouragement, for hope, and for leadership—and together we are going to march shoulder to shoulder to the end that freedom is preserved in the world."

The following month, the Vice President was dispatched to Paris to confer with General Lauris Norstad, Supreme Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Thomas K. Finletter, U.S. Ambassador to NATO, and James P. Gavin, U.S. Ambassador to France. He brought with him President Kennedy's promise that the United States would do all in its power to strengthen NATO, the aim being "a true Atlantic community with common institutions."

His travels continued in 1962. He went to Puerto Rico to attend ceremonies celebrating the tenth anniversary of

the Commonwealth, and to inspect Peace Corps installations. He represented the President at ceremonies marking the independence of Jamaica. He journeyed to the Middle East to discuss continuation of American aid to nations in that area.

In crisis-ridden October of that year, the Vice President met with the ambassadors of the Organization of American States on his own Texas ranch, in preparation for the United States position regarding Cuba.

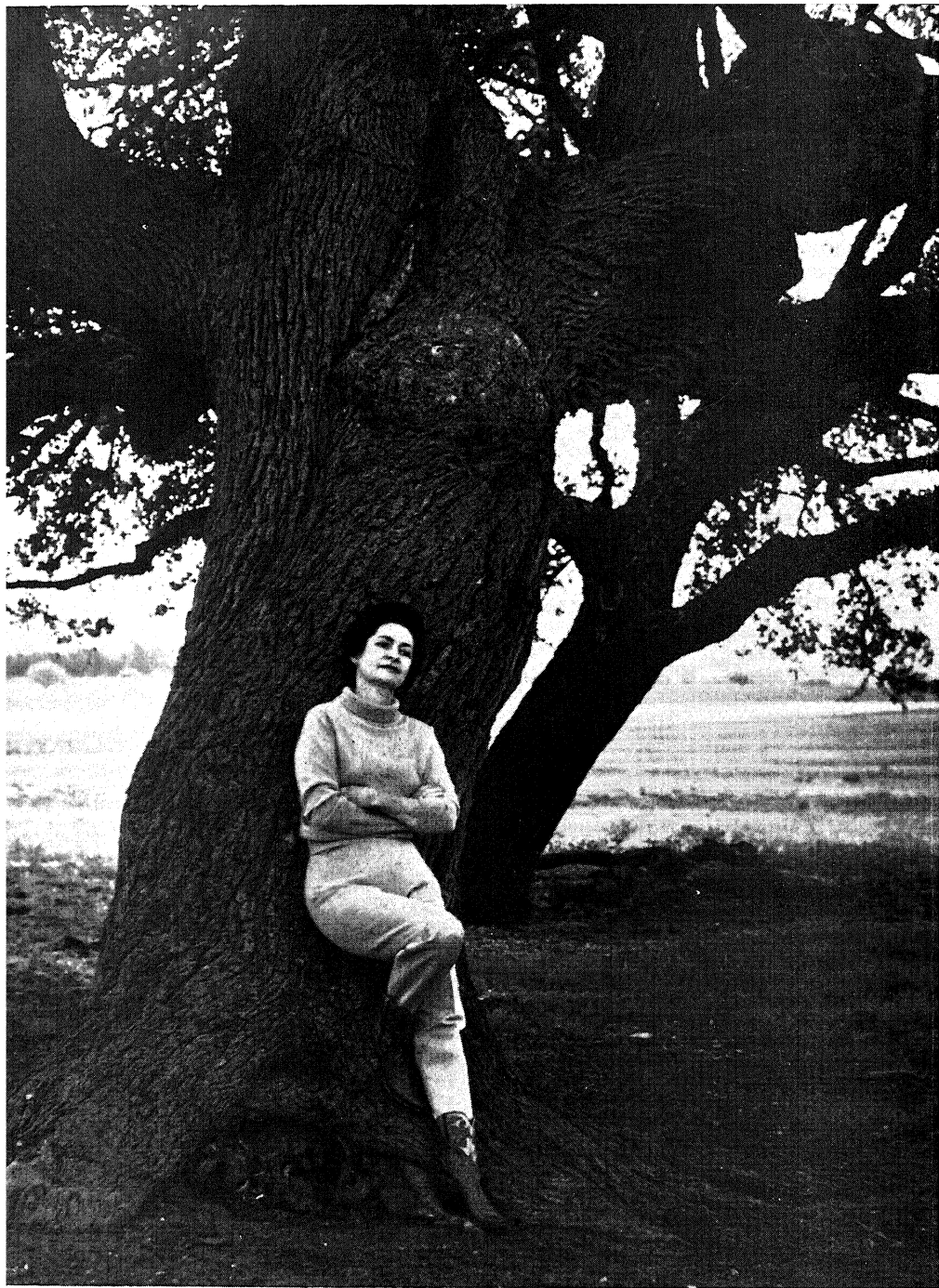
Johnson's travels were going on almost up to the time he was called upon to assume the presidency. On November 5, 1963, he set out for a trip to the Benelux countries, a tour designed to give reassurance to those nations with respect to American policies in foreign trade. Just before his return to the United States, he took occasion to declare again that all American policy, both foreign and domestic, was based on a cornerstone of the Atlantic alliance.

"The spirit of partnership is the prevailing force of American purpose," he said in an address in Brussels. "Our nation is a member of other partnerships—the Pacific partnership, the partnership of the Americas, and the partnership of our own states."

Prior to the journey to the Benelux countries, Johnson had traveled in 1963 to the Dominican Republic to represent the United States at the inauguration of the president following the fall of Trujillo; to Rome as personal representative of President Kennedy at the funeral services of Pope John XXIII, and to Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark and Iceland, where he emphasized continuing United States interest and support



The President and his family at their Texas home.



Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson, photographed on the President's ranch.

RIGHT: An informal picture of the President  
in front of his ranch house.





*World Wide*

November 22, 1963: Lyndon B. Johnson, standing between Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Kennedy, is sworn in as President of the United States aboard the presidential plane at Love Field near Dallas, Texas. Federal Judge Sarah T. Hughes administers the oath of office.

for these allied and two friendly neutral nations of Northern Europe.

The Vice President's wide-ranging world travels had the same serious purpose as his roamings within the United States. On his trips he acted as the eyes and ears, as well as frequently the voice, of the President of the United States. The public may have thought of the trips as good will junkets, of little lasting value, but the fact was that from each of them Johnson brought back to the President a penetrating report of enormous assistance as a guide to U.S. policy.

There were side effects, too. That initial visit to Senegal had set a pattern for many of Johnson's subsequent journeys to other nations. Whenever he could, he got down off a speaker's platform or alighted from an automobile to mingle with the people. It became common to see pictures in the newspapers of a tall, smiling man in the middle of a milling crowd of Asians or Africans, their hands outstretched in greeting and their smiles responding to the friendliness of the first American Vice President they had ever seen.

On one of his early trips, the 1961 visit to Pakistan, he impulsively invited a camel driver with whom he was shaking hands to come and see him in America. The camel driver later sent word that he was accepting the invitation so casually tendered and would be along soon. Surprised or not, the Vice President and the country rose to the occasion. The camel driver was given a warm welcome to the United States and was received as a guest at the Johnson ranch in Texas, where so many of the mighty men of the world had been made to feel at home or better.



Inevitably, some of the more fusty admirers of protocol in the diplomatic service did not look with pleasure on the Vice President's frequent informality on his travels abroad. Johnson himself once complained to the President that he felt as if some of the people in the State Department "are always looking at me through invisible monocles." But he was only being himself. There was no way he could keep from reacting as he did to an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness.

He had his own acid opinion of stuffed-shirt critics who, he said, have "ridden in regal and dignified aloofness past the people over whom they had domination." He declared: "We cannot demonstrate the essence and spirit of the American political system unless we get out of our limousines abroad as we would at home. After all, what dignity are we trying to prove—that of the office of Vice President or that of the human race?"

While his travels abroad made the news headlines, they were by no means Johnson's only, or even principal, contribution to the Kennedy Administration. He was a working Vice President, a man, as he had always been, constantly in motion.

Some political observers had thought that Lyndon Johnson the Vice President would be to a very large extent a continuation of Lyndon Johnson the Senate Majority Leader. It was widely predicted that he would be a sort of super-lobbyist before Congress, and particularly before the Senate, for the Administration's legislative program. His old and close ties on Capitol Hill would be used for all they were worth, according to this theory.

There was never any chance that anything like this



would happen. Johnson had a deep-rooted respect for the traditional separation of governmental powers. It was, in his own words, bred into the marrow of his bones, and now that he was a member of the executive department he would have no more thought of injecting himself into the functions of the legislative department than he would have considered voting the Republican ticket in the next election.

His only constitutionally assigned duty was to preside over the Senate, and he almost always did so for a short time every day when he was in Washington, before turning the chair over to a designated Senator. He also met briefly with Democratic leaders of the Senate from time to time. Otherwise, Congress went its way without aid or hindrance from the Vice President.

His responsibilities were different now. They were primarily executive in nature. On general assignment as an adviser to President Kennedy, he conferred frequently with him. He also sat in on the weekly meetings of the National Security Council, attended Cabinet sessions, and was on hand at the weekly meeting of the President with Democratic leaders of Congress.

Discussing his duties on the March 26, 1963, telecast with three news reporters, Johnson observed: "President Kennedy and the members of his staff and Cabinet have given me every opportunity to be aware of all the important decisions that have been made and to participate in them, and to make any recommendations I care to make."

The Vice President also served as chairman of the National Aeronautics and Space Council, chairman of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportu-

nity, and chairman of the Peace Corps Advisory Council.

The Space Council was set up to oversee the operations of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Provision for the establishment of the Council had been made in the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, for which Johnson was in large part responsible. But the Space Council had never actually been formed. The Space Act was amended, early in the Kennedy Administration, to make the Vice President head of the Council, whose members included the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Atomic Energy Commission Chairman, and the Administrator of NASA.

This obviously was a logical assignment for Johnson. He was vastly enthusiastic about the space program and had a strong grasp of the far-reaching ramifications involved in it. The Council staff organized by the Vice President prepared the studies he used early in 1961 to convince President Kennedy that the American space development program should set the goal of landing men on the moon before the end of the decade.

In his capacity as chairman of the Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, the Vice President threw himself with steady determination into the effort to halt racial discrimination in the offering of jobs on projects in which the Federal Government was in any way involved. He tried to make the work of the Committee and his personal endeavors largely educational. He held many private meetings with senior executives of large corporations and talked with businessmen, in both private and public, about race relations.

In a speech before one of the many groups he addressed

on the subject, Johnson said: "I want to stress that our committee is not an employment agency. We are not in the business of getting jobs for people because of their race, because of their creed, because of their color, or because of their ancestry. But we are in the business of assuring that no one is barred from employment because of those reasons. And when I say we are in business, I mean that we mean business!"

He did mean business. His concern with and hard-held faith in racial equality and human dignity were not new. And if the businessmen to whom he talked would not listen to reason, he had a potent weapon he could use: power over government contracts. Under his persuasion and with his discreet display of this weapon, when necessary, some fifty major companies, employers on a massive scale, agreed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Committee to reject racial barriers in personnel practices.

The work of this Committee was close to Johnson's heart. "We are past the point," he said, "and should have passed the point many years ago, where we can tell people to be patient and life will be better for their descendants. I believe in going to work to make life better for all of us now—and then improve upon it so it will be even better for our descendants."

The jobs he did as Vice President were not the kind the political wiseacres had predicted they would be, and may not have been exactly as Johnson had thought they would be. But they were exciting, demanding, more-than-full-time tasks, and he worked at them the way he had worked at all his jobs all his life. It would have been understandable if he had chafed when would-be comedians

made poor jokes pitched on the theme of "What ever became of Lyndon Johnson?"

President Kennedy knew quite well what "had become" of him. The mutual respect the two men felt for each other grew steadily greater through their continued association. The President was particularly insistent not only that the Vice President be "in on" major policy decisions but also that he be kept fully informed on all major concerns of the Federal Government and issues involving it.

In the first year of the Administration, on August 10, 1961, the President and the Vice President agreed to adhere to the same procedures adopted by President Eisenhower and Nixon with respect to any questions of presidential inability. This agreement provided that in the event the President became incapacitated he would, if possible, so inform the Vice President, and the latter would serve as Acting President, exercising the duties and powers of the office, until the incapacity had ended. In case the inability was such as to prevent the President from telling the Vice President to serve in an acting capacity, the Vice President would decide, after consultation with the Cabinet, on his course of action. And, in either case, the President would determine when the inability had ended and would then resume his official duties.

Except for the Eisenhower-Nixon arrangement, there had been no such understandings as this in the past. "For this reason," said the White House announcement of the agreement, "prior Vice Presidents have hesitated to take any initiative during the period when the President was

disabled. Obviously, this is a risk which cannot be taken in these times, and it is for this reason that President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson have agreed to follow the precedent established by the past Administration."

One result of the increasingly close relationship between the President and the Vice President was that Johnson came to have a clear-eyed understanding of the giant scope of the President's task. He once remarked, after leaving a conference with President Kennedy, "The President carries heavier burdens than I ever envisioned. You feel little goose pimples coming up on your back because it's such a terrifying responsibility."

It was this responsibility that the tragedy in Dallas had thrust with numbing suddenness upon the shoulders of Lyndon Baines Johnson. He recognized its gravity as no other man could. But he did not give the impression of a man who was terrified.

# XVII

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Senator Johnson and Vice President Johnson held strong views on questions of far-reaching importance to the American people. When he felt something was to be gained, when he felt progress toward a desirable goal was made more possible by his setting forth of these views, he did not hesitate to express them. On some subjects of national concern, he stated his position often enough and strongly enough to justify the conclusion that his approach to these problems constituted a major part of his fundamental political philosophy.

The Senator and the Vice President made many such statements, some of them formal addresses in the Senate or before varied audiences in many parts of the country, others in radio and television talks or interviews, still others in response to direct questions by representatives of newspapers and magazines.

As he ascended to the presidency, these statements, these revelations of his political and economic and human rights views, these insights into his personal approach to matters of national concern, took on an added significance.

Some of them follow.

## CIVIL RIGHTS

*An address on Memorial Day, May 30, 1963, at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania:*

On this hallowed ground, heroic deeds were performed and eloquent words were spoken a century ago.

We, the living, have not forgotten—and the world will never forget—the deeds or the words of Gettysburg. We honor them now as we join on this Memorial Day of 1963 in a prayer for permanent peace in the world and fulfillment of our hopes for universal freedom and justice.

We are called to honor our own words of reverent prayer with resolution in the deeds we must perform to preserve peace and the hope of freedom.

We keep a vigil of peace around the world.

Until the world knows no aggressors, until the arms of tyranny have been laid down, until freedom has risen up in every land, we shall maintain our vigil to make sure our sons who died on foreign fields shall not have died in vain.

As we maintain the vigil of peace, we must remember that justice is a vigil, too—a vigil we must keep in our own streets and schools and among the lives of all our people—so that those who died here on their native soil shall not have died in vain.

One hundred years ago, the slave was freed.

One hundred years later, the Negro remains in bondage to the color of his skin.

The Negro today asks justice.

We do not answer him—we do not answer those who lie beneath this soil—when we reply to the Negro by asking, “Patience.”

It is empty to plead that the solution to the dilemmas of the present rests on the hands of the clock. The solution is in our hands. Unless we are willing to yield up our destiny of greatness among the civilizations of history, Americans, white and Negro together, must be about the business of resolving the challenge which confronts us now.

Our nation found its soul in honor on these fields of Gettysburg one hundred years ago. We must not lose that soul in dishonor now on the fields of hate.

To ask for patience from the Negro is to ask him to give more of what he has already given enough. But to fail to ask of him—and of all Americans—perseverance within the processes of a free and responsible society would be to fail to ask what the national interest requires of all citizens.

The law cannot save those who deny it, but neither can the law serve any who do not use it. The history of injustice and inequality is a history of disuse of the law. Law has not failed and is not failing. We as a nation have failed ourselves by not trusting the law and by not using the law to gain sooner the ends of justice which law alone serves.

If the white overestimates what he has done for the Negro without the law, the Negro may underestimate what he is doing and can do for himself with the law.

If it is empty to ask Negro or white for patience, it is not empty—it is merely honest—to ask perseverance.



Men may build barricades, and others may hurl themselves at those barricades. But what would happen at the barricades would yield no answers. The answers will only be wrought by our perseverance together. It is deceit to promise more, as it would be cowardice to demand less.

In this hour, it is not our respective races which are at stake—it is our nation. Let those who care for their country come forward, North and South, white and Negro, to lead the way through this moment of challenge and decision.

The Negro says, "Now." Others say, "Never." The voice of responsible Americans—the voice of those who died here and the great man who spoke here—their voices say, "Together." There is no other way.

Until justice is blind to color, until education is unaware of race, until opportunity is unconcerned with the color of men's skins, emancipation will be a proclamation but not a fact. To the extent that the proclamation of emancipation is not fulfilled in fact, to that extent we shall have fallen short of assuring freedom to the free.

## RESPONSIBILITY

*Statement by the Senate Majority Leader before the Senate Democratic Conference, January 4, 1955, a time when the government was politically divided:*

It is customary to speak of an election victory as a "reward." But it is more realistic to think of it as a responsibility—an increased responsibility.

The coming two years will test our abilities to a far greater extent than anything we have known in the past

two years. As far as Congress is concerned, the spotlight will be focused squarely upon us.

We will be held strictly accountable to a court from which there is no appeal—the American people.

It is my belief that the American people expect continued responsibility from us. They are expecting the Democrats to be positive; to be prudent; to be statesman-like. They do not want blind opposition nor blind support.

They want the Democrats to build a positive program that will serve the country.

### PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

*In an address before the Houston, Texas, Chamber of Commerce, August 12, 1963:*

I do not . . . subscribe to the notion that the support of free private enterprise is a matter open to partisan debate between our political parties.

It is my belief that no political party can be a friend of the American people which is not the friend of American business. Likewise, it is my belief that no political party can be the friend of business which is not the true and constant friend of the people.

Businessmen and politicians are not natural adversaries in our free society. On the contrary, it is imperative to the success of each, and to the success of our system both at home and in the world, that they work together as understanding allies. . . .

I believe we are entering a new and unique period in the affairs of the world and of our own land here at home. It is a time of rare opportunity—a time when we can

correct many of the things we know need correction, a time when we can cure much that needs curing, a time when we can hope to assure the victories for our cause which we have been seeking for so long.

If we are to realize the full promise of this opportunity, it is urgent that we be a unified people, that we do not permit ourselves to be divided by either dogmas and doctrine, or doubts and despair.

## FAITH IN AMERICA

*In a Commencement address at MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Illinois, June 2, 1963:*

Our nation is now strong—the strongest in the world. Our people have never been so universally well educated. The differences in ability and talent among our regions have never been so small. . . .

We have lived through times of awful dread. We have groped our way toward free world unity along the overhanging ledge of nuclear war. The peril has not ended, nor will it end soon.

Our enemies abroad are implacable. The destructive elements of hate and suspicion among us at home are relentless. We must not underestimate either danger, nor compromise either, nor appease either.

Americans will neither be pulverized by Communists nor demoralized by extremists. America will still be thriving when the last chains of Communism have rusted into dust.

Americans know this. . . . The American spirit is not cowering in terror or quaking with doubt. There is an

unmistakable quickening in the forward stride of a confident nation and a confident people. It is not coincidence that this comes as we attend to our homework.

We have done our homework on space. We have come from far behind in space to shake off the needless anxiety produced by past neglect. We are doing our homework on governmental reform. We are attending to the reform required of our outmoded and out-of-date Federal revenue policies. We are applying ourselves more energetically to the problems in the lives of our people—and the hand of the past is resting less heavily upon us.

The lesson is inescapable, just as the prospect for the future is unmistakable. A stronger America, a wiser America, a more capable America will, by broadening the horizons of home, add to its strength to lead freedom toward broader horizons in the world.

## EDUCATION

*In an address at William Jewell College, Liberty, Missouri, November 9, 1961:*

Education is not a problem. Education is an opportunity.

*At University of the Philippines, May 13, 1961:*

It is in the soil of ignorance that poverty is planted. It is in the soil of ignorance that disease flourishes. It is in the soil of ignorance that racial and religious strife takes root. It is in the soil of ignorance that Communism brings forth the bitter fruit of tyranny.

Education is man's only hope. Education is the impera-

tive of a universal and lasting peace. . . . Education is the key that unlocks progress in the struggle against hunger and want and injustice wherever they may exist on the earth. It is the path which now beckons us toward the planets and the stars. Above all else, it is the well-spring of freedom and peace.

*At Tufts University Commencement Exercises, Medford, Massachusetts, June 9, 1963:*

Our American commitment to education is old and longstanding. But the real impact has just begun to come within very recent years.

We have entered an age in which education is not just a luxury permitting some men an advantage over others. It has become a necessity without which a person is defenseless in this complex, industrialized society.

Levels of education which were once regarded with awe have now become commonplace. And jobs which once could be filled by strength and native intelligence now call for a college degree. We have truly entered the Century of the Educated Man.

It is a mistake, however, to confuse skill with education. A man who has been taught only to hold a job has not been educated—he has been trained. And the man who has merely been trained is not fully qualified to take his place in a free society as a fully participating citizen.

Education, of course, is not something that is acquired just in college. All of life is an education process and when I think of death, I think of it as the moment when the brain ceases to inquire and to expand.

## SPACE

*In Washington, D.C., October 11, 1959:*

We ought to spend the money, the time, and the effort to surpass the Russian effort. I don't think we have the proper sense of urgency.

*In New Orleans, April 19, 1962:*

We are going to the moon because it is a logical step in the exploration of the universe, and we know that the steps we have already taken have paid off a valuable return on our investment.

*In Dallas, April 23, 1963:*

We cannot wishfully and unrealistically assume that no nation will extend its objectives of world domination by means of space weapons. To reach for the moon is a risk, but it is a risk we must take. Keep in mind that failure to go into space is even riskier.

*In Washington, Goddard Memorial Dinner, March 23, 1963:*

There would be no reason for us to be concerned with space at all except for the clear and compelling implications of space to those values of our system and our society for which no price is too great. Freedom is a sturdy plant, but it cannot grow and flower on this earth if the universe which envelops us is poisoned and contaminated by tyranny.

If we are to be successful in freedom's cause, we must concern ourselves with bridging the gap between space science and political science. Nowhere else has science served freedom as nobly and abundantly as under our system. Likewise, nowhere else has the political system supported scientific inquiry and achievement more effectively or more understandingly. . . .

In a day when machines can talk to each other and work with each other, it is neither too much to ask nor too much to hope that responsible men of the technological community can and will find their way to mutual understanding to assure our greater success in achieving the goals essential to our freedom.

## THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

*From a radio address when President Johnson was a member of the United States Senate:*

We think of the United States as a young nation. And so it is, in many respects. Our nation is young in the vigor and progressiveness of its people—young in the history of the world—young in the sense that we look to the future, not to the past.

And yet in the field of government we cannot be accounted youthful. In fact, the United States today has the oldest unchanged form of government in the world.

Count over the nations of the world and you will realize this is true. During the span of our national existence we have seen monarchies fall, democracies born, tyrannies abolished—only to be replaced in some instances by more barbarous tyrannies.

Through it all—through wars and economic stress and changing political alignments—the United States has survived and grown stronger as a nation in which representative government has brought the blessings of freedom to all.

Our Federal Government has to be big to give adequate governmental service to the people of a big nation. But it must never be allowed to become so overwhelmingly big that it swallows up the powers and responsibilities of the state and local governments.

To meet the needs of the times, our government must be strong. That strength must extend up and down the structure of our government—including the city halls and county seats and state capitals as well as the city of Washington, D.C.

## COMMUNISM

*On how to combat Communism (as a U.S. Senator) :*

The greatest strength of free peoples in the struggle with Communism is their unique ability and their traditional willingness to change, to adapt themselves to varying situations, to find new answers to old problems.

That is one thing that distinguishes democratic systems from totalitarian systems. Our freedom includes the right and the ability to change.

If we want to lose our freedom and lose our strength, we can do so by permitting Communism to frighten us away from change.

I am not one who agrees that the active quest for peace is indicative of weakness. Only those who are strong, and



who are confident of their strength, can effectively seek peace.

I believe this nation must remain sufficiently strong to sit at the conference table with Communist representatives and seek the answer to the survival of two worlds. In our foreign policy, we need and can have the combination of hardheaded realism and dynamic imagination of our forefathers.

Free men do not desire to dictate the course of allied governments or to attempt to overthrow the chosen governments of other independent nations. . . .

We must not deceive ourselves as to what is possible and what is not possible. We must not assume strengths where they do not exist—or weaknesses where they do not exist.

The Communist empire is vast and forbidding. It stretches across the largest land mass on the face of the globe. It has enslaved hundreds of millions of people.

But, like every other structure built on fear and hate, the Communist empire has its soft spots. The most vulnerable point consists of the people themselves.

There are many men and women who have welcomed Communists into their country because they were deceived by the false promises of Marxist paradise. There are few, however—very few—who have tasted the Communist whip and do not burn with a desire to be rid of it. Even in the nations overrun and exploited by the Communists, the spirit of independence still lives and cannot be crushed completely.

We must bend our thoughts and our efforts to a search for means by which this spirit can find expression.

Preservation of freedom is everybody's business. We will all lose our liberties if we fail. We can save them only if we work together. And nothing—absolutely nothing—can be done unless the American people understand the issues and are united.

## RELIGION

*At Presidential Prayer Breakfast, February 1, 1961:*

We need to remember that the separation of church and state must never mean the separation of religious values from the lives of public servants. . . . If we who serve free men today are to differ from the tyrants of this age, we must balance the powers in our hands with God in our hearts.

*At Presidential Prayer Breakfast, March 1, 1962:*

We meet here on the oldest frontier—the frontier of man's communion with God.

To be moral, free nations need not be weak nor pursue the ways of weakness. The highest morality of national leadership is to create and maintain the strength essential to the preservation of our beliefs. It is for the wisdom to use our power wisely that we should pray.

*At Presidential Prayer Breakfast, February 7, 1963:*

Our Constitution separates state and church. We know that separation is a source of our system's strength. But the conscience of our nation permits no separation between men of state and faith in a Supreme Being. Since

the United States first stood on its feet among the nations of the earth, the men who have guided her destiny have had the strength for their tasks by going to their knees. This private unity of public men and their God is an enduring source of strength for our country and our cause.

*At Christmas Pageant for Peace, White House Ellipse, December 20, 1961:*

In the last analysis, our strength does not reside in material things. Our wealth and our arms, our great cities and our mighty buildings will avail us not if we lack spiritual strength to subdue mere objects to the higher purposes of humanity.

One source of spiritual strength is faith—faith in the moral government of the Universe, faith in the reality of ideals, faith which enables man to transcend the vanities of life for the sake of ends beyond himself.

Let no one mistake the American purpose. Our nation is dedicated to Christ's quest for peace—not the false peace of evasion and retreat, but the divine peace which comes as the fulfillment of striving and the climax of commitment.

We will never falter in that dedication.

# XVIII

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America and the world asked, "What kind of President will he be?"

The final answer would be written by historians of the future. But the millions who could not wait for history's verdict sought feverishly for signs and portents. What this man was and what this man did could affect their personal lives in many diverse ways. In their quest they turned, with almost frantic eagerness, to the newspapers and magazines, to the radio and television commentators, to public officials who had served with him and to friends who had grown up with him.

To meet this sudden, urgent demand for knowledge about the new President, the printing presses and air waves of the country poured a mass of information—along with some misinformation—into the eyes and ears and into the minds of the American people. Some of it was trivial. Much of it might be considered irrelevant. But most of it was factual, important, to the point. And all of it was soaked up by a concerned and anxious citizenry.

The picture that emerged, and quickly, was reassuring to their fears.

The strength of the American system of government

had once again been tested and had proved sound. Also, the country knew it owed much to a presidential nominee of 1960 who had insisted that the vice presidential nominee must be a man fully capable of filling the presidency. John F. Kennedy had so insisted and thus, even in death, he was a benefactor to the people of the United States.

Thanks to his insistence, the people still had a President who would move with both prudence and courage to uphold the position of the United States in the world, who would act with determination and strength to improve the situation of submerged elements of the American population, who would work with vision and force to anticipate problems yet to show themselves above the horizon.

The people of the United States had a President who, in 1959, had stated "What I Believe" in these words:

"First, I believe every American has something to say and, under our system, a right to an audience.

"Second, I believe there is always a national answer to each national problem and, believing this, I do not believe there are necessarily two sides to every question.

"Third, I regard achievement of the full potential of our resources—physical and human—to be the highest purpose of governmental policies, next to the protection of those rights we regard as inalienable.

"Fourth, I regard waste as the continuing enemy of our society, and the prevention of waste—of resources, of lives, of opportunity—to be the most pressing of the responsibilities of our government. The elimination of waste of this sort carries with it a continuing obligation for government, at all levels, not to create waste itself

by extracting from the people the fruits of their new opportunities through improvident excesses in spending and taxing.”

The American people had a President of common sense, of courage and intelligence, a man of profound dedication who had demonstrated time and time again that he was endowed with a genius for getting things done for the good of the country he loved.

THE END  
THAT IS A BEGINNING

ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT JOHNSON  
TO JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS,  
NOVEMBER 27, 1963

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, members of the House, members of the Senate, my fellow Americans :

All I have I would have given gladly not to be standing here today.

The greatest leader of our time has been struck down by the foulest deed of our time. Today John Fitzgerald Kennedy lives on in the immortal words and works that he left behind. He lives on in the mind and memories of mankind. He lives on in the hearts of his countrymen.

No words are sad enough to express our sense of loss. No words are strong enough to express our determination to continue the forward thrust of America that he began.

The dream of conquering the vastness of space—the dream of partnership across the Atlantic and across the Pacific as well—the dream of a Peace Corps in less developed nations—the dream of education for all of our children—the dream of jobs for all who seek them and need them—the dream of care for our elderly—the dream of an all-out attack on mental illness—and, above all, the dream of equal rights for all Americans whatever their race or color.

These and other American dreams have been vitalized by his drive and by his dedication. And now the ideas and the ideals which he so nobly represented must and will be translated into effective action.

Under John Kennedy's leadership this nation has demonstrated that it has the courage to seek peace, and it

has the fortitude to risk war. We have proved that we are a good and reliable friend to those who seek peace and freedom. We have shown that we can also be a formidable foe to those who reject the path of peace, and those who seek to impose upon us or our allies the yoke of tyranny.

This nation will keep its commitments from South Vietnam to West Berlin. We will be unceasing in the search for peace; resourceful in our pursuit of areas of agreement even with those with whom we differ; and generous and loyal to those who join with us in common cause.

In this age when there can be no losers in peace and no victors in war we must recognize the obligation to match national strength with national restraint. We must be prepared at one and the same time for both the confrontation of power and the limitation of power. We must be ready to defend the national interest and to negotiate the common interest.

This is the path that we shall continue to pursue. Those who test our courage will find it honorable. We will demonstrate anew that the strong can be just in the use of strength, and the just can be strong in the defense of justice. And let all know we will extend no special privilege and impose no persecution.

We will carry on the fight against poverty and misery and disease and ignorance in other lands and in our own.

We will serve all the nation, not one section or one sector or one group—but all Americans.

These are the United States—a united people with a united purpose. Our American unity does not depend upon unanimity. We have differences but now, as in the



past, we can derive from those differences strength, not weakness; wisdom, not despair. Both as a people and a Government we can unite upon a program—a program which is wise and just, enlightened and constructive.

For 32 years, Capitol Hill has been my home. I have shared many moments of pride with you—pride in the ability of the Congress of the United States to act, to meet any crisis, to distill from our differences strong programs of national action.

An assassin's bullet has thrust upon me the awesome burden of the Presidency. I am here today to say I need your help. I cannot bear this burden alone. I need the help of all Americans in all America.

This nation has experienced a profound shock and in this critical moment it is our duty, yours and mine, as the Government of the United States to do away with uncertainty and doubt and delays and to show that we are capable of decisive action—that from the brutal loss of our leader we will derive not weakness but strength—that we can and will act, and act now.

From this chamber of representative government let all the world know, and none misunderstand, that I rededicate this Government to the unswerving support of the United Nations—to the honorable and determined execution of our commitments to our allies—to the maintenance of military strength second to none—to the defense of the strength and the stability of the dollar—to the expansion of our foreign trade—to the reinforcement of our programs of mutual assistance and cooperation in Asia and Africa—and to our Alliance for Progress in this hemisphere.

On the 20th day of January in 1961, John F. Kennedy told his countrymen that our national work would not be finished "in the first 1,000 days, not in the life of this Administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet."

"But," he said, "let us begin."

Today in this moment of new resolve, I would say to all my fellow Americans, let us continue.

This is our challenge: Not to hesitate, not to pause, not to turn about and linger over this evil moment, but to continue on our course so that we may fulfill the destiny that history has set for us.

Our most immediate tasks are here on this Hill:

First, no memorial oration or eulogy could more eloquently honor President Kennedy's memory than the earliest possible passage of the civil rights bill for which he fought so long.

We have talked long enough in this country about equal rights. We have talked for a hundred years or more.

It is time now to write the next chapter, and to write it in the books of law.

I urge you again, as I did in 1957 and again in 1960, to enact a civil rights law so that we can move forward to eliminate from this nation every trace of discrimination and oppression that is based upon race or color. There could be no greater source of strength to this nation, both at home and abroad.

And, second, no act of ours could more fittingly continue the work of President Kennedy than the early passage of the tax bill for which he fought all this long year.

This is a bill designed to increase our national income and Federal revenues, and to provide insurance against recession. That bill, if passed without delay, means more security for those now working, more jobs for those now without them, and more incentive for our economy.

In short, this is no time for delay. It is a time for action—strong, forward-looking action on the pending education bills to help bring the light of learning to every home and hamlet in America; strong, forward-looking action on the pending foreign aid bill, making clear that we are not forfeiting our responsibilities to this hemisphere or to the world, nor erasing Executive flexibility in the conduct of our foreign affairs and strong, prompt and forward-looking action on the remaining appropriation bills.

In this new spirit of action the Congress can expect the full cooperation and support of the Executive branch, and in particular I pledge that the expenditures of your Government will be administered with the utmost thrift and frugality.

I will insist that the Government get a dollar's value for a dollar spent. The Government will set an example of prudence and economy. This does not mean that we will not meet our unfilled needs or that we will not honor our commitments. We will do both.

As one who has long served in both houses of the Congress, I firmly believe in the independence and the integrity of the legislative branch. And I promise you that I shall always respect this. It is deep in the marrow of my bones.

With equal firmness, I believe in the capacity and I believe in the ability of the Congress, despite the divi-

sions of opinions which characterize our nation, to act—to act wisely, to act vigorously, to act speedily when the need arises.

The need is here. The need is now. I ask your help. We meet in grief, but let us also meet in renewed dedication and renewed vigor. Let us meet in action, in tolerance and in mutual understanding.

John Kennedy's death commands what his life conveyed—that America must move forward.

The time has come for Americans of all races and creeds and political beliefs to understand and to respect one another. So, let us put an end to the teaching and the preaching of hate and evil and violence. Let us turn away from the fanatics, from the far left and the far right, from the apostles of bitterness and bigotry, from those defiant of law, and those who pour venom into our nation's bloodstream.

I profoundly hope that the tragedy and the torment of these terrible days will bind us together in new fellowship, making us one people in our hour of sorrow.

So let us here highly resolve that John Fitzgerald Kennedy did not live—or die—in vain. And on this Thanksgiving Eve, as we gather together to ask the Lord's blessing and give him our thanks, let us unite in those familiar and cherished words:

America, America,  
God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good  
With brotherhood,  
From sea to shining sea.











(continued from front flap)

ate, covered most of twenty-four years. Students of government and working politicians alike called him the most effective Floor Leader in the history of the Senate. During nearly three years as Vice President he was deeply involved in the policy decisions that affected the fate of the United States and of the world. *The Lyndon Johnson Story* includes accounts of the many trips he made to world capitals, and to trouble spots such as Berlin, in the interests of the United States. In addition to President Johnson's address to the joint session of Congress, shortly after he assumed office, the book contains an essay on his political philosophy written in 1958 for the University of Texas *Quarterly*.

Booth Mooney has been a newspaperman and writer since he was seventeen. He has known President Johnson since 1952, and for six years, during the time the President was a Senator, Mr. Mooney was his executive assistant. *The Lyndon Johnson Story* is a revised and greatly expanded version of the 1956 book originally written by Mr. Mooney.

The portrait on the jacket front was reproduced from the original in the possession of the President. Drawn from life, © Louis Lupas.

*Jacket design by H. Lawrence Hoffman*

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